UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAMS IN THREE MAJOR CITIES IN ALBERTA

by

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ABSTRACT

The primary purposes of the study were to explore and describe the various in-school suspension (ISS) programs in use in public and separate schools, which contain any of the grades 7 to 12 in three urban centers in Alberta, and to identify factors which were perceived to support or inhibit success of these programs. To obtain information relative to the research questions, the survey method was employed. The instruments used to gather information were a researcher-constructed, fixed response, 48-item ISS questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview schedule, which contained eleven open-ended questions. A total of 386 questionnaires were mailed, and the researcher received 176 (46%) useable returns. Questionnaires were completed predominantly by teachers (33%), principals (26%), vice-principals (22%), and guidance counselors (7%), in 88 schools. Participants in the study were promised anonymity.

The most frequently suggested reason for developing and implementing an ISS program was to provide an alternative to out-of-school suspension (OSS). The vast majority of respondents noted that principals and vice-principals were involved in the development of the programs. Among schools not having an ISS program, the most frequently mentioned reason was that the school did not believe that such programs were effective. Some (37%) respondents stated that their school's ISS program was not patterned after a theoretical model while 11% said it was. Fifty-five percent of the participants indicated that in their school no funds were specifically allocated for ISS. Most respondents (95%) reported that disruption in class resulted in students' placement in ISS. Thirty-one percent of the respondents reported that their school had no follow-up procedures for ISS students who had "done their time." Twenty percent indicated that their school's ISS program had not been evaluated. Thirty-three percent suggested that their school's ISS program's main strength was its ability to remove the disruptive student from the regular classroom, and its main weakness was the absence of a specific ISS room. Finally, 22% of the participants stated that counseling of suspended students was not part of their ISS program.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that ISS programs helped keep students in school, but these programs did not contain all of the characteristics postulated in the literature on ISS programs.

DEDICATION

In loving memory of my late parents,
Edward and Iris

and late sisters
Sheila and Elsie

Thanks Mom and Dad for your encouragement and for your love and hope for me to succeed in my schooling.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Maintaining discipline in schools is one of the major challenges facing educators today. However, educational historians noted that violence and disorder have plagued school for centuries, and these acts, according to Aries (1962), were highlighted in the history of schools. In France, for example, violence and disorder were rampant in schools from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. This period is replete with stories of mutinies, violence and armed revolts by students. In an attempt to address these behaviors, some school officials required students to surrender their arms "on entering the college, weapons being placed in safe custody in return for a receipt, and handed back to the pupil when he went out" (p. 315). It was also quite common for "pupils who had been punished [to take] their revenge by beating up their masters, who had to send for the police" (p. 317).

In England students mutinies, indiscipline, and rebellion in schools lasted until the early nineteenth century. Aries (1962) stated that "mutiny had become one of the typical and picturesque aspects of the idea contemporaries had of school life" (p. 319). Student strikes and violence in public schools were not only frequent but also quite severe at times, that masters had to request military assistance to restore order.

Aries (1962) also pointed out that the disciplinary system in schools, in both countries, during that period was based primarily on whipping of students at the master's discretion, and students spying on fellow students for the master's benefit. At first corporal punishment was limited to young children, but "it was extended, after the sixteenth century, to the whole school population, which often approached and sometimes passed the age of twenty" (p. 261).

Camp (1981) indicated that the primary role of the teacher in American public schools during the first half of the nineteenth century was to enforce obedience by dictatorial governance of the students, while the student's first duty was to obey. "A set of punishments [was] available for the teacher to prescribe for rule breakers, [and] the severity of the punishment administered increased from very mild at first to very severe for continuing offenders" (p. 41). Camp (1981), quoting from the discipline handbooks of the 1800s, further described the various escalating sequence of punishments – verbal

embarrassment, being fastened in a pillory for a school day, shackled at the ankles, suspended from the rafter in a large sack or basket, and being yoked together in groups of four to six -- imposed on students who challenged the absolute, unlimited authority of the teacher.

Sullivan (1988) claimed that in the United States "the philosophy and techniques of discipline began a process of slow change" (p. 2) by the mid-1900s. Garinger (1936; cited in Sullivan, 1988) verified "this shift by noting that the old techniques of flogging, prolonged tiptoeing, and the wearing of the dunce cap were being replaced by Saturday school, home visits, and academic penalties" (p. 2).

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA, 1976) noted that in Alberta, teachers, school trustees, parents and the public in general voiced concerns about student behavior in school. Corporal punishment, suspension, and expulsion were some of the strategies widely used by school officials in their effort at improving discipline. With reference to corporal punishment, the Alberta School Trustees Association (ASTA, 1976) expressed the view that "there is nothing to prevent a provincial government or a school board from regulating corporal punishment, as was done in 1973 by the public school board of the City of Lethbridge, Alberta" (p. 16). This school board forbade the use of corporal punishment in schools under its jurisdiction. However, a resolution, presented at the 1975 Annual Meeting of the ASTA, requesting abolition of corporal punishment in tax-supported schools in the province, was debated but not adopted.

The ASTA (1976) also noted that The Peace River School Division #10, The County of Red Deer #23, and The Wainwright Roman Catholic Separate School Board had a policy regarding laggard students which was viewed as a special case for suspension and expulsion. "The purpose of this policy [was] to get students to work to the best of their ability, and to foster within the school a concern for study" (p. 26). The term "laggard student" was used to describe "a student whose achievement is below acceptable standards – through neglect of duty, and because of a negative attitude towards formal education, which is detrimental to the welfare of the school – and consistently below his [or her] capabilities" (p. 25).

As a generalization based on the changes in student discipline practices over time, it is apparent that schools need to have discipline policies which outline those behaviors

that are acceptable and those that are not; along with techniques which can and cannot be used .to enforce these policies. However, as Hartwig and Ruesch (1994) indicate "the responsibility for the successful implementation of a comprehensive discipline plan rests within the school environment and, ultimately, with the classroom teacher who must balance the school's educational expectations, the student's needs and interests, and legal requirements" (p. 316).

In keeping with this line of reasoning, Graff (1981) indicated that discipline "has to be cultivated through daily encounters between pupils. We need to begin to stress to young people that the most important lesson is for them to become self-disciplined, understand their actions, and take responsibilities for themselves" (p. 2). Additionally, Lordon (1983) stressed that administrators and teachers should be consistent in interpreting rules and policies, and in dealing with discipline problems because inconsistencies in these areas are detrimental to good school discipline.

Traditional methods, especially suspension from school, developed as means of maintaining discipline and control in school were not as effective as they needed to be; yet, according to David (1993), some school administrators continued to rely on them. However, Hartwig and Ruesch (1994) pointed out that "school authorities seeking ways to control students' violence and disruptive behavior rediscovered and modernized 'stay after school' into in-school suspension" (p. 7). School administrators, instead of suspending the disruptive students from school, placed them in isolated classrooms where core school work could continue under the strict supervision of school personnel. Additionally, Preston (1973) pointed out that the genesis of in-school suspension (ISS) programs in the United States in the 1970s was attributed to an urgent demand for an alternative to repeated suspension from school.

Dilling (1979) noted that school counselors "felt that the school should deal with the suspension-causing behavior within the very setting in which it was unacceptable rather than remove the behavior from the setting by suspending the student from school" (p. 472). Furthermore, when students are suspended at home, in a number of cases, all the parties concerned "become further alienated from one another as a result of the action, when the opposite effect was the stated desired outcome" (p. 472). Harvey and Moosha (1977) concluded that ISS programs could serve as "a bridge instead of a break in the

educational process, and, as such, broaden the curriculum for a selected group of students by focusing on behavior and modifying and channeling improper behavior into a more positive direction" (p. 17).

The Purpose of the Study

Sections 18f and 20f of Alberta's School Act (2000) noted that teachers and principals have the legal responsibility to "maintain order and discipline among the students while they are in the school or on the school grounds and while they are attending or participating in activities sponsored or approved by the board." The intent of school discipline, noted by Alberta Education (1993) is to assure that "the school is [not only] a safe and secure environment where learning can take place, [but also] a place where children, at a minimum, peacefully coexist with others and avoid violent acts and, ideally, learn self-disciple and self-control" (p. 7). In an attempt to achieve this objective punitive disciplinary methods – suspension and expulsion – and rehabilitative forms of discipline, such as behavior contracts and in-school suspension for students, have been adopted.

Sheets (1996) and Short, Short and Blanton (1994) noted that there is a broad spectrum of ISS programs in the literature. In addition, Sheets (1996) pointed out that ISS programs can accomplish the objective of changing unwanted student behavior, "but only if the program is appropriately designed and maintained to be an effective part of the school's total discipline philosophy" (p. 86).

Accordingly, the purposes of this study are to explore and describe the various ISS programs in use in public and separate high schools which contain any of the grades 7 to 12 in three urban centres in Alberta, and to identify factors which are perceived to support or inhibit success of the program.

Statement of the Problem

The research questions for the study are: What are the characteristics of the ISS programs in Alberta, and what factors support or inhibit success of these programs?

Specific Research Questions

Based on the conceptualizations and methodologies articulated by Hudson (1980), Sampson (1985), Sullivan (1988), and Johnson (1991), fourteen specific research questions were developed, as follows:

1. What were the reasons for developing and implementing the ISS programs in the schools?
2. Who were involved in developing and implementing the ISS programs?
3. To what extent did the public and separate schools, which contained any of the grades 7 through 12, in three major cities in Alberta, utilize ISS as part of their discipline program?
4. How long have the ISS programs been in operation?
5. What is the philosophy behind the ISS programs?
6. What are the goals of the ISS program?
7. Was the program patterned after a theoretical model?
8. What were the sources of funding for the program?
9. What is the organizational structure – location and suitability of the ISS facility, follow-up procedures with students who had been in ISS, and program evaluation – for implementing the ISS program?
10. a) What intervention strategies were typically employed prior to referral of students to ISS?
    b) What behaviors led to students being assigned to ISS?
    c) Who assigned the students to ISS, and for how long?
    d) What information about the referred student was given to the ISS teacher?
11. How is the ISS program staffed, and what training is provided for ISS staff?
12. What are the components of the daily ISS program?
13. What is the perceived effectiveness of the ISS programs?
14. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the ISS programs?

Significance of the Study

The study would have theoretical and practical significance, and implications for further research.

Theoretical Significance

The theories discussed in the following brief overview advocate that: (a) inappropriate student behavior occurs when the needs of students are not being met, (b) "to achieve order, teachers must exercise ultimate control of students, and (c) students and teachers need to be equal partners in managing group processes and developing individual self-discipline" (Porter, 1996, p. 10). This study would challenge and reaffirm theories regarding the behavior of students.

Central to Dreikurs' theory is the belief that: (a) the ultimate goal of student behavior is to fulfill the primary need to belong – to be accepted by others and have an important place in the group, (b) students choose their behavior, and (c) if students are unable to attain the goal of belonging through pro-social behavior they will resort to four mistaken goals – attention, power, revenge seeking, and displaying inadequacy – to gain the recognition they seek (Dreikurs, Grunwall, & Pepper, 1982). Misbehavior results regardless of which of the four goals the student adopts.

Dreikurs and Cassel (1990) stated that teachers should teach students to accept responsibility for their own behavior through encouragement and the imposition of logical or natural consequences. The authors further pointed out that logical consequences, arranged jointly by the teacher and students, are reasonable results that follow desirable or undesirable behavior. When students behave according to agreed-upon rules, they enjoy pleasant consequences. Logical consequences are effective if students care, if they are applied consistently, and if preventive measures are in place to encourage appropriate behavior.

Canter and Canter (1992) assert that teachers and students have rights and needs in the classroom. Teachers have the right and responsibility to: "(a) establish rules and directions that clearly define the limits of acceptable and unacceptable behavior; (b) teach students to consistently follow these rules and directions; and (c) ask for assistance from parents and administrators when support is needed in handling student behavior" (p. 5). Students' rights and needs include a caring teacher who persistently sets firm and consistent limits, who provides students with positive encouragement, and who helps students learn and behave responsibly. The Canters also maintained that teachers need to be assertive in order to set limits effectively, and must continually model, through their

own behavior, trust and respect for students.

Canter and Canter (1992) contend that consequences that result when students choose to violate rules are not punishments, but are outcomes of students' behavioral choices. Consequences do not have to be severe, but must be unpleasant to students, yet not harmful physically or psychologically. Furthermore, consequences should be applied systematically, in a step-wise manner, according to a discipline hierarchy.

The Canters also paid special attention to difficult-to-handle students – students who are continually disruptive, persistently defiant, demanding of attention, or unmotivated. They recommended identifying these students' needs, contacting their parents at the first sign of a problem, one-to-one problem solving conference between the teacher and student, and referring the student to in-school suspension.

Albert's (1996) *Cooperative Discipline* is a synthesis of Adler, Dreikurs and Glasser's theories of behavior and discipline. In extending their theories, Albert (1996) discussed, in detail, students' needs for belonging. Students choose their behavior, and according to Albert (1996), teachers cannot force them to behave in certain ways, but can exert a positive influence on behavior choices that these students would make in the future.

Albert (1996) also stated that for students to experience a strong sense of belonging in school, they must satisfy the "Three Cs" – capable, connect, and contribute. Students need to feel: (a) capable of completing academic and other school tasks according to standards of the school; (b) that they can connect successfully at an appropriate personal level with classmates and teachers; and (c) that they can contribute to the group in a significant way.

Albert (1996) further suggested that teachers should work cooperatively with students to develop a classroom code of conduct which specifies how everyone is supposed to behave, and a set of consequences to be invoked when the code is violated. Albert proposed generous use of encouragement. She stated that "perhaps no factor that influence how students choose to behave is as important as the amount of encouragement students receive from a teacher" (p. 15). Students should be taught the code of conduct, and when they seriously or repeatedly violate the classroom code of conduct, consequences, including in-school suspension, should be enforced.

Albert (1996) strongly recommended that parents be involved as partners in *Cooperative Discipline*. The author, recognizing that students will misbehave even in the best setting, stressed teaching proper behavior rather than focusing on punishment.

Practical Significance

After an extensive search of the literature no systematic study of ISS programs in schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12, in Canada, was found. This study appears to be the first of its kind. However, researchers (Haupt, 1987; Sullivan, 1988; Patton, 1990; Johnson, 1991) have conducted studies of ISS programs in various school districts in the United States. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide school personnel and other interested parties with insights that can assist them in planning, implementing, evaluating, and updating ISS programs in order for these programs to achieve maximum effectiveness.

Implications for Research

School administrators have incorporated ISS as a method of discipline in schools across the United States and Canada. Researchers and writers (Siskind et al., 1993; Johnson, 1991; Johnston, 1987; Short, 1988a; Anding, 1984; Chobot & Garibaldi, 1982) have recommended continued investigation of ISS in areas such as referral policy, effectiveness of ISS, participation in its planning and implementation, and evaluation of the program. Toby and Scrupski (1990) said that "comprehensive research into [ISS], however, is rare and sometimes of dubious quality" (p. 271). Duke (1990), in summarizing research undertaken by school districts regarding the consequences of their own ISS programs noted that "given the political environment in which district-sponsored research typically is conducted, it is likely that many of these evaluations tend to portray results in as positive a manner as possible. Caution should be used in interpreting these studies" (p. 32).

The above-mentioned reasons along with "the high use of ISS warrant [continued research] of the type of programs being utilized and their efficacy in meeting the educational and behavioral needs of rule violators" (Sullivan, 1989a, p. 32). The findings of this study would, not only add to existing knowledge on ISS programs, but would also

have implications for future research. Additionally, useful insights and understanding can be gained from similar studies of ISS programs in a Canadian setting.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the definitions of the following terms are provided below.

Discipline Policy: is "a guideline established by a school board [or district] which sets appropriate standards of behavior and consequences for violation" (North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1987, p. 11).

Expulsion: denotes permanent exclusion of a student from school in a particular school in a school district.

In-School Suspension (ISS): is a school sponsored program in which the suspended student is temporarily excluded from regular classes for a specified number of class periods or days, and housed in an alternative place in the school or school district, where academic work is done under the supervision of school personnel.

Participation: is "the involvement of school members [and] strategic constituencies in important activities related to decision making and planning such as identifying problems, procuring and sharing information, developing ideas, making policy, planning actions or programs, and sharing responsibility and authority" (Cheng, 1996, p. 70).

Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): is the temporary restriction of a student's attendance and participation in school for a period not exceeding five days, and during which time the student is not allowed on school grounds.

Delimitations

Delimitations "are the boundaries of the study" (Best & Kahn, 1993, p. 40). The study of the disciplinary strategies used in high schools is an enormous exercise, thus in order to make the proposed study manageable the following delimitations were formulated:

1. This study focused exclusively on one disciplinary strategy – the ISS program – in schools which contain any of the grades 7 to12 in the public

and separate school districts in Alberta, during the 1999/2000 academic year.

2. Only school personnel – principals, vice-principals, guidance counselors, teachers, teacher's assistants, secretaries, librarians, behavior management specialists, and a student – in three major cities in Alberta received mailed-out questionnaires.
3. A group of 11 participants was purposefully selected from 40 respondents who volunteered to take part in follow-up interviews.
4. The ISS literature that guided the study was drawn, mainly, from American and Canadian sources.

Limitations

In addressing the issue of limitations – "those conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations" (Best & Kahn, 1993, p. 40) – the reader will be asked to take into account the following:

1. This study focused on public and separate schools, in three cities in Alberta, which contained any of the grades 7 to 12. It is not claimed that this sample is representative of Alberta schools having any of these grades. Consequently, the findings would not be representative of private schools and other schools in Alberta which contain these grades.
2. The study depended not only on participants' willingness to respond to the questionnaire accurately and to the best of their ability, but also on the information and insights shared by interviewees.
3. The questionnaire with its inherent limitations (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1996; Best & Kahn, 1993; Van Dalen, 1979) was the major instrument used to gather data. Specifically, the disadvantages of the questionnaire, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) are: (a) unclear or seemingly ambiguous questions cannot be clarified; (b) the respondent does not have the opportunity to expand or react verbally to a question of interest or importance; (c) selection-type items on the questionnaire may not include

the respondent's true response among the options given. However, the advantages of using questionnaires, as pointed out by Gay (1996), are: they are "more efficient in that [they] require less time, [are] less expensive, and permit collection of data from a much larger sample" (p. 255).

4. The reader is also asked to bear in mind that the study was limited by the access the researcher had to a small number of documents, which were provided by participants who chose to do so.
5. The research was completed from the perspective of the school – parents and students were not asked.

Summary

In Chapter 1 the purpose of the study, statement of the problem and the significance of the study for educators and researchers were outlined. This was followed by the definition of terms, and a discussion of the delimitations and limitations of the research study.

Organization of the Thesis

The dissertation contains 6 chapters. The purpose and significance of the study were presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 contains the review of the related literature on out-of-school suspension and ISS, along with a framework for analysis of ISS programs in three major cities in Alberta. The research methodology is described in Chapter 3. The findings of the study are presented in Chapter 4. The data chapter was followed by Chapter 5, in which the study findings are discussed in terms of the related literature on ISS. The final chapter, Chapter 6, contains a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations, and implications for theory, for practice and for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

ISS has gained widespread acceptance as a disciplinary strategy in schools. In an attempt to explore this innovation, the significant literature is drawn from three main areas of scholarly works. In part 1, the organizational characteristics of schools, which may affect student performance and behavior, are discussed. This is followed in part 2 by an examination of out-of-school suspension and its consequences. Finally, in the third and final part of the chapter, the literature and research on ISS are presented.

Organizational Characteristics of the School

Various models and theoretical studies are available in the literature on organizational characteristics of schools. Duke and Seidman (1982) contend that the "dysfunctional behaviors [of students] can be lessened by altering school organization, rather than by attempting the difficult and frequently counter-productive task of changing students directly" (p. 140). However, there is lack of agreement among theorists (Centra & Potter, 1980; Duke, 1990) regarding the meaning of the terminology "organizational characteristic," and what constitutes an organizational characteristic. The purpose of this section is to present a synthesis of the writings and research on organizational characteristics in terms of school and class size, and rules. In addition, a major school objective – reducing student victimization – is discussed.

School and Class Size

School and class size – the number of students and employees per unit – may contribute to student behavior problems. Gottfredson and Gottfredson's (1985) study of victimization in schools found that school size, teacher resources, coordination, leadership, and formalization correlated with some form of student discipline problem, specifically, teacher and student victimization, disorder and disruption. They recommended (1) the creation of smaller schools "where teachers have extensive responsibility for and contact with a limited number of students in several aspects of their education, and where steps are taken to ensure adequate resources for instruction" (p. 171), and (2) the breaking down of large schools into smaller schools, such as schools-

within-a-school.

According to Ornstein (1989, 1990), a school is thought of as being too small where under-utilization of staff and curriculum occur. On the other hand a school is considered too large when a loss of school and personal identity among students occurs: they are unable to participate fully in athletic and social activities, or have difficulty interacting among themselves, or feel they do not belong to the student body or school in general. In terms of numbers, secondary schools with enrollments of less than 300 students are considered too small while those with over 1500 students are deemed too large (Digest of Education Statistics, 1993; cited in Luenburg and Ornstein, 1996). Ornstein (1990) concluded that, although there may be disagreement regarding the exact size, "largeness is considered socially and psychologically detrimental, producing anomic behaviour among many students, in many cases loneliness or despair, and perfect ingredients for increasing the likelihood of deviant student behavior (drug use, Satan cults, and suicides)" (p. 240).

Barnes (1991) in his study of the effect of school size upon the occurrence of discipline problems inferred that "principals of larger high schools experience greater problems with major discipline problems than do principals of smaller high schools, and principals of larger high schools experience greater problems with minor discipline problems than do principals of smaller high schools" (p. 3133A). Hyman et al. (1997) lending further support for small schools argued that:

> Smaller schools are a primary deterrent to violence. When most school staff are familiar with students and their families, they will be able to foresee impending problems .... This will enable them to intervene early by asking the appropriate questions of students, parents, and others to determine the potential for violence. (pp. 253-254)

Robinson and Wittebols (1986), after reviewing 35 years of research on class size, concluded that "smaller classes appear to have a positive effect on pupil behavior and attitude in early primary grades" (p. 204). Blatchford and Mortimore (1994) came to a similar conclusion after examining most recent documentary and research evidence on class size for young children. However, at the junior and senior high school levels "the majority of studies to date have found no significant differences in student behavior and

attitudes between the smaller and larger classes" (Robinson & Wittebols, 1986, p. 204).

Rules

Duke and Seidman (1982) expressed concern regarding "whether organizational characteristics influence the ability of schools to accomplish certain objectives related to student behavior" (p. 144). One of the school's objectives, according to the authors, "is to maximize the likelihood that students obey school and classroom rules" (p. 144). One way to address this issue is to consider the rules themselves: school and classroom rules, their nature, number and consequences, and consistency in enforcement.

School and classroom rules. Tattum (1989) noted that "rules together with regulations, ritual and routine are the main mechanisms used to achieve and maintain good order" (p. 74). According to Cangelosi (1997), rules will have at least one of four purposes, namely: to maximize on-task behaviors and minimize off-task behaviors, especially when it disrupts others; to ensure a safe and comfortable learning environment; to prevent activities of the class from disturbing neighbouring classes; and to maintain standards of courtesy among all school members.

Watkinson (1991) pointed out that The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, "part of Canada's supreme law, is the touchstone against which all government policies, including school rules, are to be measured" (p. 63). This means that, although provincial governments and school boards are still able to draft laws and policies, they "must ensure that the rights and freedoms set out in the Charter are protected. If they do not protect the rights and freedoms of students and staff, their laws, policies and practices may be the subject of a charter challenge" (p. 63).

Porter (1996) noted that at the school-wide level the brief list of mandatory "rules may include only those behaviors prohibited at school, [and] it is likely that this set of rules will be imposed on students without negotiation" (p. 288). The author further suggested that teachers "may present obligatory rules as a fait accompli, and discuss the rationale for them, and then negotiate remaining standards" (p. 239). Grossman (1995; cited in Porter, 1996) observed that "in a democracy we all have to abide by rules that have been decided by others, and that therefore this may not be detrimental for students" (p. 239).

Hyman et al. (1997) and Adams (1987) argued that students, teachers, parents and members of the community should participate in the formulation of school-wide rules to maintain discipline. However, Adams (1987) maintained that the principal should retain final decisions regarding school-wide rules. Although the principal and teachers have "the final discretion about rules, student compliance is more likely if students have had a role in their development, modification, and implementation" (Hyman et al., 1997, p. 291). Grossman (1995; cited in Porter, 1996) pointed out that students "compliance to rules may be similar whether or not the students participate in formulating them" (p. 238). According to Porter (1996), although "this may be true, the process of establishing the rules is educational and as an exercise in social problem solving it is valuable in itself" (p. 238).

Adams (1987) suggested that "if the school already has rules then these should be reviewed at reasonably frequent intervals. Circumstances change, old problems disappear and new ones arise. Rules should be up-to-date and relevant" (p. 183). Furthermore, according to Jones and Jones (1998), Porter (1996), Alberta Education (1993), and Adams (1987), it should not be assumed that all students will readily understand school-wide rules. In addition, some students will take longer to learn them. Homeroom teachers should thoroughly discuss the school rules with their students to ensure students' understanding.

Emmer, Evertson, and Worsham (2003) stated that teachers should, first, have information regarding school-wide rules before they begin planning class rules with their students. Jones and Jones (1998), and Emmer et al. (2003) recommended that the discussion of class rules and procedures should be undertaken at the beginning of the academic year. In the words of Emmer et al. (1994), "During the discussion of the rules and related behaviors, it is best to emphasize the positive 'do' parts of the rules rather than just their negative counterparts. When you do the former you help students learn how to behave appropriately" (p. 21). In addition, each rule along with its rationale, benefit, and penalty associated with breaking it should be explained.

Jones and Jones (1998) and Emmer et al. (2003) believe that students should be involved in developing classroom rules. Additionally, "obey all school rules" should be included on the list of class rules because it serves as a reminder to students that school

rules apply both inside and outside the classroom.

At the secondary school level, according to Emmer et al. (2003), students may be provided with handouts describing class rules. They also added, "It must be remembered that secondary school teachers instruct five or more classes. If each class generates different rules, posting them may be a problem and remembering which rules are associated with which class may become cumbersome" (p. 23). However, Jones and Jones (1998) indicated that "students will be more likely to behave in accordance with rules if they know that the rules are accepted by significant others, such as their parents and peers" (p. 241).

Nature of the rules. Rules are designed to ensure that the school's objectives are achieved in a relatively fair and efficient manner. However, the nature of these rules may determine how students adhere to them. MacKay and Sutherland (1990) noted that, in a Canadian context, "the major Charter [of Rights] concern is with the actual content or substance of the rules" (p. 72). If school rules are "discriminatory then they will likely be held to violate the equality guarantees contained in section 15 of the charter. [However], not all discriminations are suspect. Many forms of discrimination are reasonable and even desirable" (Dickinson & MacKay, 1989, pp. 199, 294).

Adams (1987) felt that rules should not be detailed and specific because "the more detailed and specific the rules, the more direct challenges there are to adventurous spirits to break them. Rules should be short, simply expressed, general rather than specific where possible, but specific in matters as safety and security" (p. 182). Dickinson and Mackay (1989) also pointed out that "if rules are too specific and leave no room for discretion, that can lead to problems" (p. 297). The case, *Taylor v. Board of School Trustees of School District No. 13* (1984), is a situation in which a school rule – any student using narcotics on or off school premises should be immediately suspended – was too specific. Justice MacKinnon of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, in ordering the termination of the student's suspension, held that the board's regulation did not provide for "due warning." In addition, Justice MacKinnon indicated that, "while the regulation could legitimately be strict, it must still allow for the exercise of discretion given the varying circumstances in individual cases" (p. 328). Jones and Jones (1998) observed that rules "should not be designed to catch [students] misbehaving so that they

can be punished. Instead, rules should provide guidelines or benchmarks that help [students] examine their behavior, considering its effect on themselves and others" (p. 240).

Number of rules. With reference to the number of school and classroom rules, Short, Short and Blanton (1994), Porter (1996), and Jones and Jones (1998) felt that they should be kept to a minimum, because fewer rules may lead to fewer behavior problems. This result is possible "not only because certain behaviors once defined as unacceptable are redefined as acceptable, but also because the existence of a lengthy list of poorly enforced rules invites more rule-breaking than a short list of consistently enforced rules" (Duke & Seidman, 1982, pp. 146-147). These writers also claimed that the reduction in the number of rules may suggest to students that they are expected to behave in a responsible manner without numerous external constraints. Adams (1987) noted that a mass of rules "will mean that the majority of pupils (and some staff) will not even read them" (p. 182).

Consequence. According to Porter (1996), "students must be aware that their behavior has consequences. Therefore when a rule is infringed, consequences must be enforced but in a dispassionate manner" (p. 239). Short, Short and Blanton (1994) claimed that when consequences are used appropriately they provide an essential medium for teaching students self-monitoring and self-correction of behavior. They also pointed out that consequences should be: (1) balanced; that is contingencies should be available for compliance with rules as well as infractions of rules, (2) "within ready control of the teacher," (3) "proportionate to and, if possible, logically linked with behaviors," and (4) "understood by [students] prior to their implementation" (pp. 45-46).

Dickinson and MacKay (1989) indicated that consequences range from mainly punitive to mainly educative, and many consequences involve both elements. "Any delineation of consequence in the school's code of student behaviour should be flexible enough to meet the wide range of situations and individuals to which those consequences will be applied" (p. 368). The authors also stated that there should be a variety of options and strategies available to school personnel who are responsible for implementing and enforcing school rules.

Consistency. Emmer et al. (2003) stated that "in the classroom consistency

means: a) retaining the same expectations for behaviors that are appropriate or inappropriate in particular activities, [and] b) that these expectations apply to every students on all occasions .... Consistency also applies to the use of penalties" (p. 132). However, even when school personnel are alert to the importance of consistent rule-enforcement, "it is not possible to be totally consistent, as there will be occasions when the most reasonable course of action will be to make an exception to a rule or procedure" (p. 132).

Duke (1980) claimed that there are two major varieties of inconsistencies – "within teacher" and "between teacher." The former refers to "the ability of an individual teacher to enforce the same rules consistently from one day to the next, [while the latter refers] to the tendency within a faculty for some teachers to enforce rules while others do not" (pp. 56-57). Tattum (1989) added that when teachers are uncertain about rules and policies on good discipline "then it is not surprising that inconsistencies occur and pupils for their part exploit the varying interpretations applied by teachers" (p. 74). Emmer et al. (1994) also expressed concerns regarding undesirable inconsistency which usually arises from three sources: first, when the rules are inappropriate, unreasonable or unworkable; second, when "the teacher fails to monitor students closely and does not detect inappropriate behavior. This gives the appearance of inconsistency when the teacher does detect misbehavior and tries to stop it" (p. 116), and third when the teacher does not feel strong enough about the rule or procedure to enforce it. According to Duke (1980), "inconsistency undermines respect for the school as a rule-governed organization" (p. 57).

Student Victimization

Hyman et al. (1997) observed that quite often the media sensationalize student victimization of peers and teachers, "exaggerating the popular conception of student crime and school disruption, [while on the other hand] public policy makers and school authorities often mask victimization of students by teachers and other school personnel" (p. 308). The authors further noted that sexual harassment is rife in schools, and school administrators may be inconsistent in dealing with this inappropriate behavior between students, and even between faculty and students. Based on their personal observations,

the writers stated that they would guess "that there are few high schools, within any given five-to-ten-year period, where at least one faculty member has not had sexual relations with a student" (p. 319). They further claimed that in numerous cases, even though others are aware of the affair, "it is either unreported to authorities or the authorities quietly end it without any publicity or punishment for the educator. Acquiescence, trivialization, and cover-ups of student maltreatments can create a climate that increases student anger, aggression, violence, and criminal behaviors" (pp. 308, 319).

MacDonald (1995) studied the perceptions of 231 students and 28 administrators with respect to the nature, extent, awareness, and management of violent behavior in five junior high schools, grades 7 through 9, in three school districts in central Alberta. The findings indicated that: over 50% of the students reported that they personally experienced fights, stolen or damaged property, punching, hitting and grabbing at school, one-fifth of the male students reported that they had been threatened with a weapon, and over 25% of female students reported that they had experienced sexual harassment. Bullying was considered to be a "very big" or "big" problem in the schools by over 50% of the students. In explaining some of the findings MacDonald (1995) noted, "School violence was not gender neutral, [and] female students indicated that they were becoming increasingly more involved in violent behaviors" (p. 74).

MacDonald (1995) further reported that "over one half of the students were dissatisfied with the way victims of school violence were treated, in particular the victims of 'bullying', 'things damaged/stolen', 'teasing, swearing, name calling' and 'sexual harassment'" (p. 74). Additionally, students often expressed preference for victims taking matters in their own hands and retaliating. However, administrators believed "that students were generally satisfied with the manner in which victims of 'threats with weapons', 'fights' and 'sexual harassment' were treated. This was consistent with students' responses, except in the case of 'sexual harassment'" (p. 76).

Equally alarming evidence of sexual harassment was reported by Browne (1998) in her study of sexual harassment in two small-city high schools, grades 9 through 12, in Alberta. The researcher reported that of the 589 students – 303 males and 284 females, plus two students who did not indicate their gender – 17% indicated that they had

experienced sexual harassment at school. In all, 10% of the boys and 25% of the girls surveyed said that they experienced school-based sexual harassment. "Male students who reported being harassed were more likely to condone harassing behaviors when the initiator was female and the target was male, and in some cases also condoned harassing behaviors between same-grade peers" (p. 89).

Frank (1992; cited in Dolmage, 1996) noted that data on youth crimes in Canada, for the period 1988 to 1991, indicated that "contrary to a general perception that a large proportion of violent youth crime occurs in schools" (p. 198), schools are, in fact, particularly safe places for children, given the proportion of time they spend at school and school-sponsored activities. For example, 28, 26, 74 and 9 percent of minor, aggravated and sexual assaults, and robbery, respectively, occurred in private dwellings, while 14, 13, 6, and 2 percent of such crimes respectively, occurred in schools.

Dolmage (1996) stated that exaggeration of the problem of school violence "as it relates to education has created, virtually overnight, the 'safe-schools' movement" (p. 203). While the motivation of the "safe-schoolers" and some of the policies are laudable, the approach has some negative side effects. Dolmage (1996) explains, "To begin with, the choice of the name – 'safe schools' – implies that schools are currently not safe" (p. 204). Second, the inclusion of "zero-tolerance" provisions in safe school policies encourages zero administrative discretion in extenuating circumstances. Finally, Dolmage (1996) concludes, "Strictly enforced, zero-tolerance policies can produce results which would be laughable, if they were not so tragically foolish" (p. 205).

Duke (1980) suggested that most student victimizations occur outside of class – "before school, between classes, after school, on the bus, in the cafeteria, and at athletic events and dances" (p. 40). Inadequate adult supervision outside of class according to Duke (1980), is one of the organizational explanations for this tendency. In Duke's (1980) words, "Only well-coordinated initiatives on a school wide basis can maximize the likelihood of meaningful improvements" (p. 40) in these out-of-class behavior problems.

The preceding discussion touched on a few of the organizational characteristics which affect student behavior. Duke and Seidman (1982), Gottfredson (1990), and

Purkey (1990) postulate that student misbehavior in school can be minimized through organizational change. However, Duke (1990) cautioned that no single organizational strategy can be said to work for all schools, and any promise of quick fixes is illusory.

Suspension

Slee (1995) indicated that the frequent use of suspension by school administrators as a disciplinary technique has come under increasing scrutiny and criticism. Depriving students of access to education is allowed under the law in various provinces and territories in Canada as long as procedural fairness is followed.

The intention of this discussion is to present an overview of the current status of suspension from school, specifically, the advantages and disadvantages of suspension, variables which affect suspension rates, appeal of suspension, and research studies that compare suspension and ISS.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Grossnickle and Sesko (1985) stated that suspension, a disciplinary measure of last resort, not only serves to protect individuals and school property, but also ensures an effective and smooth running school environment. Grossnickle and Sesko (1985) indicated that suspension points out the seriousness of the student's misconduct, and assists the student in developing self-control and acceptable behavior in school. It also provides an opportunity for school officials to inform parents or guardians of the misconduct and to solicit their cooperation in dealing with the behavior problems of their children. Another purpose attributed to suspension is that it is instructive and may function as a deterrent to other students who are tempted to model censured conduct for which suspension is imposed. Proponents argued that suspension is a necessary strategy for maintaining proper conduct. The majority of students should not have to suffer from the constant disruption of a few who are not interested in learning. According to Garibaldi (1979) suspension, therefore "provides students with an opportunity to 'cool off' and consider the disruption that they have caused" (p. 98).

The consensus of the literature on suspension is that suspension is not a constructive approach: it solves few problems and in the long run may cause considerable

harm. Radin (1988), a critic of suspension, noted that the technique is blatantly inhuman, ineffective and counter productive, while Tropea (1987) sees it as a "backstage" way of dealing with difficult students in urban schools. Kaeser (1979), Chobot and Garibaldi (1982), Seegrist (1985), and Toby and Scrupuski (1990) concur that the loss of instructional time (due to suspension) although undesirable for any student, may be especially devastating for students who are experiencing academic difficulty, and this, in turn, may increase school failure and misbehavior. Furthermore, "isolation from peers and personal feelings of failure and rejection may encourage students to drop out of school" (Chobot & Garibaldi, 1982, p. 318). Moseley (1977) also pointed out that "suspending students from school and forgetting about [them] until the suspension is up is not a constructive approach .... All the student has to do to get back into school is to stay away for a while" (p. 26).

Opponents of suspension have emphasized that "the severely damaging consequences of suspension is seen to greatly outweigh whatever potential disciplinary value it has" (Wu et al., 1982, p. 246). They felt that suspendees were not only likely to loose self-respect and feel unwanted, but were also likely to be stigmatized by their friends and teachers. Quite often, during suspension, students are left unsupervised because a large majority of parents today are obliged to work. This, according to Garibaldi (1979), creates the "possibility that students will loiter and be susceptible to engaging in misdemeanors – shoplifting, disorderly conduct, or minor acts of vandalism .... In addition, schools may suffer the loss of daily revenues if allocations are based on average daily attendance formulas" (p. 98).

Garibaldi (1979) also noted that on numerous occasions students are the victims and "do not always deserve the blame; because of their own frustrations, [administrators] easily fall into the trap of using suspensions as an expedient response to a problem that they do not want to or are unable to handle" (p. 98). Moseley (1977), Sweeney-Radar, Snyder, Goldstein and Rosenwald (1980), and Toby and Scrupski (1990) agree that suspension delivers an effective symbolic message to suspendees. The message is that there is no strategy within the school environment for changing the behavior of deviant students, and as a result the school has temporarily given up on such students.

Slee (1995) argued that acknowledging suspension as a regular "part of the

disciplinary process, combined with the desire to be seen as 'hawkish' in matters of school discipline, negates what proponents argue as the value of suspension: an effective measure as an instrument of last resort" (p. 54). Frequent use of suspension lessens its impact on students, as Sweeney-Rader et al. (1980) suggested, to a point where "suspension not only fails to contribute to changing a student's behavior but may, in fact, encourage his or her acting-out" (p. 19). Doyle (1990), lending support, concluded that "suspension can be inherently rewarding, a vacation from a setting the student is likely to find aversive" (p. 124). If suspension is overused, then, according to Toby and Scrupski (1990), "it is because, between detention and suspension, schools have precious little in the way of a disciplinary sanctions. To control their most unruly students, schools need disciplinary options intermediate in severity between after-school detention and suspension" (p. 276).

Mizell (1978) expressed the view that suspending students for attendance infractions – "truancy, cutting class, excessive tardiness, leaving campus without permission – is an irrational and ineffective disciplinary response which only compounds the problem of absence from school" (p. 213). The author further noted that "suspension is not the most effective or productive response to a range of nonviolent, non-overtly disruptive offenses such as 'smoking', 'disrespect', 'use of abusive language', 'insubordination' or, as in one school district, 'public affection'" (p. 213).

Wu et al. (1982) claimed that, "from the records of the public debates, it is rather clear that less out-of-school suspension is commonly preferred by both proponents and opponents of student suspension" (p. 247). McManus (1987) expressed the view that a restrictive policy towards suspension should be adopted in schools, and suspension should only be used for serious cases of bullying or intimidation. Moseley's (1977) list of suspendable offenses includes "vandalism, smoking, drug use, stealing and fighting" (p. 26), while The Children's Defense Fund (1975) asserted "that only situations which pose a direct and serious threat to people or property are causes for [suspension] from school" (p. 20).

Variables that Affect Suspension Rates

According to Slee (1995) "suspension is further implicated by the lack of clarity

in its application and administration. Determination remains a matter for the principal or [vice-principal's] professional prerogative" (p. 55). In Canada education is provincially mandated, and as a result each province, individually, regulates school discipline through an act of its legislature. Suspension in Alberta is bound by the School Act (2000), which stipulates that:

> 24. (1) A principal may suspend a student from school if in the opinion of the principal the student has failed to comply with section 12 – (a) be diligent in pursuing his [or her] studies; (b) attend school regularly and punctually; (c) co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services; (d) comply with the rules of the school; (e) account to his [or her] teacher for his [or her] conduct; and (f) respect the rights of others, or with section 24. (1) (b) the student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.

Under Alberta law a principal may suspend a student for a fixed period, not in excess of five consecutive days.

Slee (1986) affirmed that:

> Inconsistencies exist between schools in their interpretations of "serious misconduct", "disruption", or "consistent misbehavior over time." This manifests itself in their decisions about suspension and in their subsequent determination of the duration of suspensions. Some schools suspend students longer for class disruption than for assault. Some suspend students for truancy while others do not. Smoking induces suspension in some schools whilst not in others. Disobedience in one school may precipitate suspension, but only a reprimand in another. (p. 92)

Slee (1986) further stated that many variables influence a principal's decision regarding suspension, such as, "time of the week, number of discipline problems already dealt with on a particular day, predisposition and humor of the incumbent, and school policy" (p. 92).

Slee (1995) pointed out that principals' reliance on professional prerogative regarding suspensions may compromise 'due process'. Rossow (1984) argued that while

the due process clause is eloquent in context it is conceptually abstruse and elusive. Fair treatment and reasonableness can be improved by carefully examining the system, or lack of system, followed in student suspension. However, regardless of how carefully a principal adheres to "procedural due process guidelines, the suspension could be successfully challenged if the decision of the administrator to suspend a student for a particular misbehavior is judged to be unreasonable or discriminatory by the court" (p. 440).

Slee (1995) and Ling (1984), after examining official reports submitted by principals, concluded that there were two distinct principles upon which cases for suspension might be established. Some principals invoke suspension for accumulated minor infractions which Ling labelled the "camel's back" principle. The second principle is the use of suspension as a measure of "outrage" against a single incident.

Ling (1984) noted that when the "camel's back" principle is employed the intention of the principal "is to demonstrate that the disruptive and problematic behaviour of the [student] has a long and complex history. Exhaustive efforts are shown to have been made, usually through the imposition of sanctions and counselling" (pp. 114-115). Furthermore, adopting the "camel's back" principle "raises the possibility that suspension might arise at the point when senior staff feel they have an 'open and shut' case rather than when they feel unable to manage or respond to a pupil's misbehaviour" (p. 116). The case for suspension based on the "camel's back" principle also requires that staff members begin compiling a "suspendable profile" on disruptive students at an early stage.

In the "outrage" approach, Ling (1984) concluded that the task confronting the principal is to convey the severity of the student's misbehavior by recounting the incident in terms that may elicit instant opprobrium. Specifically, "in seeking to communicate the requisite sense of extremity and abnormality of behavior measured descriptive analysis is replaced by a retreat to stereotypical portrayals and the emotive language of terms like 'berserk', 'villainous' and 'incurable'" (p. 117).

Slee (1995) also expressed the view that "a further problem of prerogative is that there exist great disparities among schools" (p. 95). Slee (1987; cited in Slee, 1995), in his earlier research, found that "the appointment of a new principal led to a surge in the

level of suspensions (p. 95).

Studies by Galloway (1982), Wu et al. (1982), and Imich (1994) reveal that school differences have greater impact on suspension than variables such as home background or socio-economic status of the catchment area. Wu et al. (1982) reported that "we can predict better whether a student will be suspended by knowing nothing at all about the student and knowing only how frequently other students in his or her school have been suspended" (p. 255). These writers went on to point out that one cannot simply concentrate on "the improvement or the alteration of students' behavior as the sole means of reducing suspension. Instead, greater attention must be directed towards the policies and the practices by which schools respond or react to the misbehavior of students" (p. 256). Additionally, "data show that more students have been suspended in schools where there is a high degree of administrative centralization in disciplinary matters" (p. 261).

McLean (1987; cited in Imich, 1994) examined school process that influenced low suspension rates in six Strathclyde secondary schools that had high levels of socio-economic disadvantage. He found that these schools shared a child-centered philosophy. Discipline was viewed by a united staff as a whole-school responsibility. Although senior staff members were supportive they also acknowledged the need to discriminate between referrals from different teachers. Referrals to senior staff that merely passed on the problem were discouraged, whilst referrals that sought practical advice and support were encouraged. Regarding suspensions, these schools had a policy of minimizing their use, viewing them as incompatible with the schools' philosophy and ethos. McLean (1987) explains their policy in this way, "Within a corrective, rather than punitive, system exclusions were considered of limited value as the school could hardly influence the excluded pupil" (p. 305).

Appeal of Suspension

The Education Acts of the various provinces in Canada, and the 1986 Education (No.2) Act of the United Kingdom, for example, establish the rights of parents, guardian or students themselves, if they are 18 years of age or older, to appeal suspension. The judicial nature of the appeal procedure may be a major source of anxiety for parents and

suspendees although the school district may place great emphasis on delimiting the adversarial nature of the suspension hearing. However, according to Slee (1986; cited in Slee, 1995) "the gap between rhetoric and practice revealed imbalances privileging schools' against students' and their parents' interests" (p. 58).

Galloway et al. (1982) recognized that parents and suspendees are at a disadvantage in suspension enquiries. The right of appeal offers them no safeguards, in fact the cards are stacked against them. The authors further pointed out that:

> There are three reasons why an appeal is likely to be distressing to parents and is almost certainly doomed to failure. The first is that parents of suspended pupils are seldom as articulate as teachers. Hence, they are less skilled in putting their case persuasively. Most, though not all, boards of governors would allow a parent to bring a friend to the appeal meeting, but parents seldom request this .... Many parents would be unable to afford the legal advice which would be necessary for them to present their case effectively. The second reason is that the parents were not present when their child's misbehaviour occurred, and hence cannot easily challenge the teacher's version .... The third reason why an appeal is likely to fail is that most governing bodies see their job as supporting the head-teacher. (p. 14)

Ling (1984) and Slee (1988) indicated that inquiry panels in the United Kingdom and Australia are limited in the range of viable options available to them. Slee (1988) stated that "panels are frequently made aware of an unwritten agenda which suggests that schools, having explored all apparent avenues, see the panel as an obligatory and cumbersome precursor to transferring the student elsewhere" (p. 9). Ling (1984) noted that the suspension panel is most likely to rubber stamp decisions taken at school. The options open to the panel, apart from upholding the suspension "are correspondence school, transfer to another school, or placement in an alternative educational setting" (Slee, 1988, p. 9).

According to Galloway et al. (1982) "it is naive to expect the governors of the suspending school to be sufficiently unbiased to act as arbiters" (p. 17). Additionally, the Advisory Centre for Education (1980; cited in Docking, 1987) stated that "parents of suspended children often feel isolated and confused and generally have no way of

knowing whether the school has acted fairly" (p. 157). Ling (1984) concluded that "little is gained by pupils or teachers in the way suspension procedures are currently organized. In effect these arrangements serve the purely administrative ends of ensuring an apparently orderly exit of pupils from school" (p. 119).

Studies That Compare Suspension and ISS

Not only were there methodological differences in the studies listed below, but there were also different findings.

The purpose of Williams' (1982) study was to determine whether there was a significant difference between school-related attitudes of secondary school students in the United States who had been suspended from school and secondary school students who had experienced ISS. Williams (1982) found that the school-related attitudes of students who received ISS seemed to be more positive than students who were suspended from school. Willams (1982) explains, "The former felt that ISS helped them learn how to relate better with their fellow students, solve their own problems and attain academic success" (p. 616A). The researcher also found that students who had been suspended "showed a lesser degree of enthusiasm for the learning process than students who had been exposed to ISS," and, further, "appeared not to have attained as much personal growth as the students who had experienced ISS" (p. 616A).

Lynch (1983) conducted a comparative study of three groups of junior high school students in the Oak Grove School District, San Jose, California. The Quality of School Life Scale was administered to 30 students who had been placed in ISS without school work, 30 who had been placed in ISS with school work, and another 30 who had been suspended from school. In addition, each the student's school record was reviewed to obtain data regarding absenteeism, recidivism, grade point average, reading and math ability test scores, grade level, family configuration, gender and race. Lynch found that there was no significant difference between the two ISS groups on the factors compared, however the suspended students had significantly higher rates of absenteeism and recidivism, lower reading and math ability test scores, and generally more negative attitudes towards school than did the ISS students.

Matusiak (1994) studied ISS and OSS programs of six St. Louis metropolitan

high schools. He found that ISS "did not seem to have any impact on the academic success of the student. The data on GPA's of students assigned to each suspension program (ISS and OSS) did not indicate any significant difference" (p. 26A). Second, he found that "minority assignment discrimination was not present between the two suspension groups. Except for only one school, there was no significant difference in the assignment of minority students to each suspension program" (p. 26A). Third, regarding recidivism Mastusiak (1993) concluded "that three of the six schools had a significant number of repeat referrals to their ISS programs" (p. 26A).

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension, also known as In-School Detention, Stop-off Room, In-House Suspension, Internal Supervision, Student Assignment Center, Supervised Discipline Center, Alternative Learning Center, and Independent Study Room, is, according to Collins (1985), a relatively new (the earliest reports go back to 1975) method of discipline which is gaining widespread use in North America. Sullivan (1989) noted that parents, teachers and school administrators have viewed "the disciplinary technique as a positive alternative to suspension and expulsion," but added that "many ISS programs have not proven successful in either lowering the number of disciplinary violations or in preventing subsequent behavioral problems for previously referred students" (p. 32).

The purpose of this section is to present a review of the literature on ISS under seven sub-headings: rationale, philosophical orientations and goals, participants in planning and implementation, ISS models, essential elements, problems, and studies of ISS programs.

Rationale

The reasons suggested for the development of ISS programs in various schools and districts are diverse, and yet similar in nature. Sheets (1996), Opuni, Tullis, Sanchez and Gonzales (1991), and Mendez (1977) expressed the view that the rationale supporting ISS is based on the need to modify the dysfunctional attitudes and behaviours of students, and the need not only to protect others, but also to provide a school

environment where productive instruction can occur. Mendez (1977) stated that ISS protected "the community from delinquent behavior that might occur during the unsupervised time of regular suspension" (p. 11). ISS also made students aware "that their actions, not the school's lack of sensitivity, are responsible for their situation, and that the school will not tolerate disruptive behavior" (p. 13). Additionally, Mendez believed that we must prevent situations in which we force students to quit school.

DiSciullo (1984) indicated that the rationale for developing an ISS program at Middle Island Junior High School in New York grew out of the need "to provide proper instruction to suspended students, to provide for effective communication and public relations with parents of disruptive students, and to provide an atmosphere for effective counseling for the disruptive student" (p. 328).

Frith, Lindsey and Sasser (1980), Harvey and Moosha (1977), and Dilling (1979) pointed out that the rationale for the establishment of ISS has been to keep students with disciplinary problems in school. Dilling (1979), in particular, stated that schools need to deal in more realistic and accountable ways with the continuing need for remediation of "suspension-causing behavior within the very setting in which it [occurs] rather than remove the behavior from the setting by suspending the student from school" (p. 472).

Other reasons for and benefits of ISS, as suggested by Dilling (1979), Nielsen (1979 a), Nielsen (1979 b), and Harvey and Moosha (1977), include: enhancing school finances through average daily attendance remuneration, ensuring other students an environment that is conducive to learning by isolating disruptors, and undermining the efforts of students who seek suspension as a vacation from school.

Philosophical Orientations and Goals

Whitfield and Bulach (1996) claimed that "educational practices need to be supported by a clearly defined philosophical construct" (p. 3). In keeping with this idea, Sheets (1996) and Sullivan (1989) suggested that in planning an ISS program it is essential to develop a philosophy that is in harmony with the school and district's overall educational philosophy. Sheets (1996) suggested that "the development of the philosophical statement should be a collective process involving staff, administration, and other parties. This statement will guide the development of the other components

needed in an effective ISS program" (p. 88).

Mizell (1978) stated that if school officials believe that the main purpose of ISS is to punish, to control or to change the behavior of students "then it is unlikely that the long-term results of [ISS] will differ much from results of other disciplinary practices conceived within a similar philosophical framework" (p. 216). Additionally, according to Mizell (1978) the goals of ISS should be based on the philosophy which suggests that school officials have a great responsibility to students, and that discipline in the schools goes beyond punishment and control. Mizell (1978) explains, "Unless the goals of [ISS] are developed on this or a similar philosophical base, the potential of [ISS] may not be fully realized" (p. 216).

Mizell's (1978) list of goals includes: (1) identifying and remedying the root problem or problems responsible for real or perceived misbehavior of students, (2) helping students achieve self-discipline, (3) gaining knowledge regarding factors that contribute to discipline-related problems and initiating preventive measures to diminish those problems, (4) eliminating the use of suspension for all cases of misconduct except those that clearly threaten the safety of school officials and students, and (5) "providing a framework within which school personnel can work on achieving the first [four] goals while enabling the majority of students in the school to continue to participate, without interruption, in the school's instructional process" (p. 216).

According to Frith, Lindsey and Sasser (1980), reduction in the number of student out-of-school suspensions was the goal in the Dothan, Alabama, City School System ISS program. Another goal of ISS, according to Mendez and Sanders (1981), Short, Short and Blanton (1994), and Hartwig and Ruesch (1994), was to exclude the problem student from the regular classroom while continuing to provide that student some educational instruction within the school setting. Opuni, Tullis, Sanchez, and Golzalez (1991) and Johnson (1991) reported that the goal of ISS was to improve students' attitude and modify inappropriate behavior.

Participants in Planning and Implementation

Corbett (1980; cited in Corbett, 1981) claimed that, "in school systems, new or revised programs are frequently mandated without participants involvement, or with

token involvement in decision making. When this occurs, participants and non-participants often feel that implementing the programs is simply another burdensome task to be completed" (p. 60). Corbett (1981) further stated that if principals want to ensure fidelity between what is intended and what actually happens, "four issues need to be resolved: (1) involvement of faculty, ISS teachers, and aides; (2) training programs for everyone involved; (3) visibility and availability of the ISS program and personnel; and (4) efficient distribution of information regarding ISS" (p. 59). Corbett (1981) explains that actually involving all these stakeholders "in decisions about the nature and policy of ISS is a tedious and difficult task," but that "nonetheless, it yields high rewards" (p. 60). Sullivan (1989a) pointed out that the use of workshops, at the beginning of the academic year, to orient faculty and staff to ISS also help in developing "a stronger commitment to the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies as well as a deeper understanding of the operational details" (p. 33).

Models

Mendez and Sanders (1981), Short (1988a), and Sheets (1996) pointed out that although ISS may differ greatly from school to school, yet these programs seem to fall within three categories – the punitive model, the academic or theoretical model, and the therapeutic model. Sheets (1996) and Short (1988a) also suggested a fourth model – the individualized – which adopts components of the other three.

The punitive model. Sheets (1996) stated that the most commonly used model is the punitive, which assumes that ISS will deter or eliminate misbehavior. Strict rule enforcement, coercive strategies, punitive activities and a jail-like atmosphere characterize this model and its implementation. Short (1988a) indicated that students are isolated even within the ISS classroom; they are not allowed to talk to one another, and the teacher's role in the ISS room is to monitor rule compliance. Students are also expected to complete academic assignments and/or punitive activities while serving a specific amount of time. Short, Short and Blanton (1994) explained that, "dismissal may come earlier if the student shows 'good behavior'. This orientation implies that the problem is the student's" (p. 18).

The academic model. According to Sheet (1996) and Short (1988a) the basic

assumption underlying the academic model, also known as the theoretical model, is that behaviour problems evolve from learning difficulties and the ensuing frustration felt by those students who are not successful in their academic work. It is felt that if basic skills in reading, writing and study habits are improved then the student's need to exhibit inappropriate behavior may diminish. Tutoring, goal-setting, and assessment of progress in academic skills are essential elements of the model.

Short (1988a) further noted that academic ISS programs can be characterized by the following:

- Students' academic skill levels are measured and learning difficulties diagnosed.
- Instruction, on a one-to-one basis, is provided in the area of weakness.
- The ISS teacher is qualified to diagnose learning difficulties.
- Many material resources that support the teaching of basic skills are available to the students.
- The experience is structured with goal-oriented rules and regulations. (p. 8)

Therapeutic model. This model is based "on the assumption that student misbehavior is a result of some particular problem that the student is experiencing for which the student needs assistance in solving" (Short, 1988a, p. 8). It is believed that counseling – peer, group, individual, reality therapy and referrals to outside counseling services – along with assistance in developing problem-solving skills will help the student resolve the problem and develop appropriate behavior. Short (1988a) stated that some programs "encompass behavioral control components that focus on the student, teacher, parents, and school structure in attempting to identify strategies that could be used to fashion a program for a student" (p. 9). Programs of this type have additional activities in parent training, staff development, and home and school survival training for students. Student behavior is also monitored during the course of the ISS program and, especially, after leaving the program. Additionally, according to Short (1988a), the therapeutic ISS program: a) "uses activities that help the student develop a better defined self-image and improve communication and problem-solving skills, [and b)] involves students in discussions to focus on appropriate ways of dealing with [the] school environment" (p. 9).

Individualized model. Sheets (1996) and Short (1988a) pointed out that some schools have developed ISS programs which have adopted components from all three models in order to address the specific problem and needs of the individual student referred to ISS. This model assumes that the reason for student misbehavior vary from student to student, and its basic goal is to change such behavior. According to Short (1988a), this model emphasizes (1) "monitoring and conferencing with students after returning to regular classes with extensive feedback on behavior change," and (2) evaluation to (a) measure student behavior change over time and (b) determine if objectives of the program are being realized" (p. 11).

Essential Elements

A review of the literature indicates that the key elements of ISS programs are: adequate financial support, an ISS room and materials, staffing, communication, assignments, reasons for and length of referral to ISS, daily operational procedures, record keeping, counseling, evaluation, and follow-up. These elements are discussed below.

Adequate financial support. Sheets (1996) and Sullivan (1989a) indicated that adequate funding for ISS programs is essential. Mizell (1978) claimed that "the extent to which additional funding may be required to [operate] an ISS program depends largely on how creatively an administrator uses the services and staff available and how many students may bew involved in the program" (p. 224). Ferrone and Piraino (1990) and Mizell (1978) suggested that additional funds may be obtained from school boards that are sympathetic to the goals of ISS programs, and sometimes it may be necessary to seek outside funding. However, according to Mizell (1978), "it should not be assumed that an [ISS program] cannot be implemented without additional funding" (p. 224). Sullivan (1989a), and Mizell (1978) asserted that when no formal positions are budgeted for ISS teachers, school administrators should consider what kind of arrangements could be made using available staff members for ISS duty.

An ISS room and materials. Regarding the operation of ISS, a key element is isolation (Mizell, 1978; DiSciullo, 1984; Patterson, 1985; North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, 1986; Foster & Knight, 1988; Short, 1988a; Siskind et

al., 1993). Mizell (1978) suggested that the ISS classroom should be located in an area that is somewhat removed from the normal traffic patterns within the school. This, according to Mizell (1978), serves three purposes: (1) "It provides the social isolation that can sometimes motivate students to 'get their act together' and complete their stay in the program so they can resume their social role in the regular school environment" (2) It reduces the chances of undesired interruption. (3) It can spare students some embarrassment as they enter or leave the ISS room. (p. 219).

Attention also needs to be focused on the degree of isolation that is desirable. Short (1988a) indicated that the ISS room should be arranged to fit the needs of a particular model. According to Mizell (1978), the room should provide "an austere setting that does not [afford] the visual stimulation usually found in normal classrooms" (p. 219). The punitive program, according to Short (1988a), "typically places students in isolated study carrels which faces towards the exterior walls of the classroom. Classrooms can be drab." Shades are pulled over the windows, clocks are covered and bulletin boards are bare (pp. 25,26). In addition, as Patterson (1985) indicates, students are not "allowed to communicate with each other in any way." The supervisor is the only person they are allowed to talk to (p. 98).

Short (1988a) expressed the view that academic programs should have "study centers or regular classroom desks arrangements with students having access to files of materials and manipulatives, dictionaries, encyclopedias and self-correcting/self-pacing skills kits" (p. 25). The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) recommended that the ISS facility should include a separate space for individualized academic instruction.

Short (1988a) recommended that both therapeutic and academic programs have "bulletin boards [and] colorful materials available that teach basic skills" (p. 26). With specific reference to the therapeutic program, The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) recommends that the ISS facility include "an office that would afford privacy for individual counseling" (p. 2).

The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) does not concur with Mizell (1978) regarding the appearance of the ISS room. Instead the department felt that all ISS facilities should meet the "requirements for a regular

classroom in regard to size, space and materials particularly because of the self-contained nature of the program" (p. 2). The department also recommended that the room be equipped with a telephone to enable the ISS monitor to contact parents and others without having to leave students unattended.

Staffing. Sheets (1996), Sullivan (1989a), Keifer (1980) and Mizell (1978) pointed out that a crucial aspect of an ISS program is the selection of a program monitor. Sheets (1996) stated, "No matter what ISS model used, the instructor [and his or her professional qualifications and personal attributes] will make or break the concept" (p. 88). Mizell (1978) advised against reassigning "an undesirable teacher from the regular classroom to the ISS program" (p. 220). Sullivan (1989a) suggested the following considerations when hiring an ISS teacher:

> [The person should have] experience in counselling, social work, or special education; disciplinary and classroom management skills; an interest in and desire to work with academically and behaviorally troubled students; the ability to relate to pupils in an empathetic, respectful, and consistent manner; knowledge regarding test administration and interpretation; instructional skills in general academic areas; competence in communicating findings to parents, teachers, and counsellors; a willingness to seek out a variety of appropriate resources and act as a referral agent when warranted; and proficiency in providing a positive atmosphere that is conducive to learning. (p. 36)

The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) indicated that "provisions should be made for on-going year-round staff development and training activities for faculty, administrators, and parents of those who have been involved in the program" (p. 2). Furthermore, the department cautions that an ISS program "should have an assistant supporting each certified program coordinator. With an assistant, a maximum of 20 students may be placed in the program. Without an assistant no more than 12 students should be placed in the program" (p. 2).

Communication. Nielsen (1979a) merely noted that at staff meetings at the beginning of the year, handout and videotape could be used to vividly demonstrate the program's philosophies and procedures. In addition, "throughout the year, time could be regularly allocated in faculty meetings for reports from the suspension center's team and

the school counselors" (pp. 329-330). Corbett (1981) explains that "principals must coordinate the system so that communication is facilitated" because students, staff and parents change yearly, and even administrators change jobs (p. 62). In Corbett's words, "As a result, these new participants and non-participants ... must be kept abreast of changes and occurrences in order to maintain their sense of 'ownership' of the program" (p. 62). Furthermore, Corbett (1981) and Sullivan (1988) claimed that information regarding student's behavior while in ISS and after leaving ISS should be communicated to parents and teachers.

Neilson (1979a) suggested that ISS staff should invite representatives from all major social and community service agencies to a meeting before the academic year begins to explain their respective agencies' services for helping students who have problems. Neilson (1979a) explains, "This could lead to the establishment of a communication network between school personnel and community agencies for referrals throughout the school year" (p. 331).

Assignments. Short (1988a) stressed that "the program model will greatly determine the types of assignments made available to students .... The punitive model usually requires only assignments from the student's regular classroom" (p. 28). Mizell (1978) stated that students in ISS should receive a quality of instruction which is comparable or superior to what they would receive in the regular classroom. Foster and Kight (1988), and Mizell (1978) expressed the view that any test or daily assignments that are given to students in the regular classroom should also be made available to students in ISS. Subject area teachers who have students in the ISS program should be responsible for sending the daily assignments to the ISS teacher. Ferrone and Piraino (1990) pointed out that "technical teachers have to be especially innovative in giving ISS students assignments that compliment the practical, hands-on work that the rest of the class is doing" (p. 17). In addition, the subject area teacher "must grade or correct any assignment or examination returned by the ISS teacher" (DiSciullo, 1984, p. 329). However, as Foster and Kight (1998) caution, "care must be taken not to burden the teacher of a student assigned to the ISS room with additional work and responsibility" (p. 5).

Mizell (1978) also counsels that students in ISS should not be academically

penalized nor permitted to do nothing. Nielsen (1979a) and Sullivan (1989a) added that students who complete their regular class work while in ISS should receive full credit. Patterson (1985), lending support, recommended "firm insistence that all assignments be completed before a student is released, even if he or she has served the prescribed number of days" (p. 98).

According to Short (1988a) "assignments in the therapeutic and academic models will evolve from the diagnosis of student weaknesses and needs" (p. 28). Leatt (1987) and Mizell (1978) suggested that staff of ISS programs must be vigilant for students' learning handicaps, inadequate preparation in lower grades, lack of basic skills, and inability to use appropriate resource materials. As Short (1988a) explaina, these "play a major role in developing assignments and additional activities for [ISS] students" (p. 28). Regarding additional activities, Ferrone and Piraino (1990) suggested that students work on learning packets which are "designed to help them look at their [specific] inappropriate behavior and find ways of dealing with situations more successfully in the future" (p. 16).

Reasons for, and length of referral to ISS. Siskind et al., (1993), Short (1988a), Johnston (1987), Chobot and Garibaldi (1982), and Mendez (1977) found that the decision to place students in ISS was reserved for the principal or assistant principal. Frith, Lindsey and Sasser (1980) reported that in the Dothan, Alabama, City School System "regular classroom and special education teachers are requested to refer students to [ISS] when they are unable to deal effectively with the student's classroom behavior" (pp. 637- 638). Garibaldi (1979; cited in Whitfield and Bulach, 1996) suggested that the classroom teacher, the school or area counsellor, the school administrator, health personnel, attendance personnel, and parents should have the option to refer students to ISS for misbehavior. Mizell (1978) claimed that there must be a clear statement of the circumstances under which a student would be referred to ISS. The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) argued that, since referral to ISS is based on the premise that ISS would replace suspension, then placement in ISS "should be based on a suspendable offense or action – disruptive behavior, verbal abuse, physical assault, truancy, the breaking of major established school policies, and other offenses listed in board policy – on the part of the student" (p. 3).

Leatt (1987) explained that "depending on the style of the principal or the size of the school, referrals may be processed by a team of administrators or other personnel who are trained to deal with such referrals" (p. 14). He also felt that besides being "fully informed about the reason for the student's referral, the persons making the decision will always need to ask themselves, 'Will the student benefit from the program?'" (p. 14).

Sullivan (1989a) supports the idea that general guidelines should be established to eliminate arbitrary referrals to ISS, and, if it is possible, all such referrals should be decided by one administrator. The author maintained that an efficient system to notify teachers, counsellors, and parents of a student referred to ISS should be established.

Garibaldi's (1979) concern regarding referrals was focused on whether ISS was "another way of pushing students out of the regular classroom. If the referral process is not well-defined, some teachers may use the alternative program instead of handling problems in the classroom" (p. 101). Mizell (1978) also called for a clearly stated referral policy, and procedures which must be communicated, in writing, to staff members, students, and parents. In addition, he suggested that someone should be appointed "gatekeeper" of the ISS program. The "gatekeeper" may be an administrator or another staff member who will be responsible for screening referrals to ISS:

> In order to determine if such referrals are appropriate and necessary to solve the root problem ... Furthermore, this "gatekeeper must have the authority to evaluate the need for and wisdom of the student's referral to [ISS] based on a pre-assignment investigation involving conversations with the student, his or her parents, and the referring educator. (pp. 217-218)

Mizell (1978) adds that the "gatekeeper" should also be "empowered to assign or not assign the student to [ISS] and, when appropriate, to recommend the use of alternatives that would more likely meet the student's needs and more quickly return [the student] to the regular classroom" (p. 218).

Short and Noblit (1985), in their study of ten ISS programs which had "good" reputations, according to educational and the state juvenile justice officials of North Carolina, found that having clearly defined referral procedures was one of the distinguishing characteristics of a successful program. Clark (1980) identified the need for studies of: (a) the procedures for assigning students to ISS, and (b) "the impact of

inconsistency in the use of criteria to determine when assignment to [ISS] is to be utilized in lieu of suspension" (p. 1400A).

Foster and Kight's (1988) survey in the United States revealed that reasons for referring students to ISS varied according to school or district. Furthermore, "the reasons for assigning students to ISS should be spelled out as part of the school's discipline code, [and this] code should be designed with input from all of the schools constituencies" (p. 6). The resulting clearly defined rules and regulations for the ISS program should be publicized at the beginning of the academic year in the student's handbook of school rules.

Mizell (1978) indicated that the issue regarding the length of time a student will be assigned to ISS is very important. Nielsen (1979a), and Chabot and Garibaldi (1982), in their descriptions of ISS programs, reported that students were assigned to ISS for one to ten days, Stessman (1984) reported three to ten days, and Johnson (1987) reported that "first-time offenders were assigned for three days while repeaters were assigned four or five days" (p. 123). Sullivan (1989a) maintained that the minimum referral period of time to ISS should be one full school day. Mizell (1978) said that no student should be referred to ISS for more than three days, and during that time the student's progress should be reviewed. He counseled that any recommendation that the student be assigned to "the program beyond three days should be accompanied by documentation detailing the rationale for the recommendation, an explanation of the activities and services proposed for the student, and what is to be accomplished during the remaining days" (p. 218). In support of shorter referrals, based on their extensive study of ten school districts ISS programs in the states of California, Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia Chabot and Garibaldi (1982) concluded that "programs that isolate students from their peers for brief periods of time (up to 10 days maximum) tend to be most effective in curbing repeat misbehavior" (p. 335).

Daily operational procedures. Patterson (1985) maintains that students referred to ISS be required to report to the ISS room "a few minutes before regular classes convene [and that they be] dismissed a few minutes after regular classes are dismissed" (p. 98). Several writers counsel that during this time they not be allowed to have any contact with other students, including friends and school mates, in the regular classes

(Ferrone & Piraino, 1990; DiSciullo, 1984; Nielsen, 1979). Mizell (1978), Nielsen (1979), Chabot and Garibaldi (1982), and Patterson (1985) indicated that ISS students should have lunch and restroom breaks on a different schedule from their peers. DiSciullo (1984) and Seegrist (1985) noted that ISS students are not allowed to leave the room unaccompanied; teachers even accompany them to the restrooms. Garibaldi (1979) expressed the view that "any similarity to a 'prison' atmosphere should be avoided because, some students interpret being escorted to the lavatories as being tantamount to solitary confinement" (p. 102). Except for these breaks, and stretch breaks which are provided at the discretion of the ISS program coordinator, the general consensus seems to be that students be required to sit in their assigned seats and work silently the entire school day.

The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986), and DiSciullo (1984), stated that students, on entering the ISS program, are provided with an orientation by the coordinator. The writers further notes that activities which take place within the first hour upon entering the program include introduction to the daily schedule, filling out forms, and discussion of discipline referrals, ISS rules, and teachers assignments. Sullivan (1989a) noted that "when ISS rules and procedures are clearly defined, thoroughly communicated in written form to staff and students, and consistently enforced, the programs are less likely to stray from their original philosophy, objectives, and strategies" (p. 34). The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) noted that since ISS students will not be involved in extra-curricular activities during their ISS term, they will spend 75 percent of their time on academics and 25 percent on counselling which is usually held on afternoons. Isolation of students along with restrictions regarding movement and talking while assigned to ISS are necessary and effective components of the program. Weiss (1983) concluded that "students may not return to school once escorted off school grounds .... If a student breaks any of the ISS rules, his or her assignment to ISS will be extended or she or he will be suspended" (p. 133).

Record keeping. Sullivan (1989), Foster and Kight (1988), Short (1988a), and Mizell (1978) claimed that careful records that pertain to ISS programs should be maintained. Foster and Kight (1988) observed that "these records basically serve two

major functions. First, they allow schools to closely monitor each student in the program and, second they provide evaluative data for judging the effectiveness of the program" (p. 8). Foster and Kight (1998) also explain that access to these records should be monitored and "careful guidelines should be established to protect a student's right to privacy and due process" (p. 8).

Short (1988a), Foster and Kight (1988), and Sullivan (1989a) stated that forms for recording data should be simple in format, and individual student's file should contain a record of pertinent assessments, type of offense, number of days assigned for each particular offense, recidivism rates, counseling given, brief comments by ISS supervisor, assignments completed during time in ISS, and other information that is pertinent to the objectives to be evaluated. Foster and Kight (1988) also warned that "care should be taken to assure that record keeping and data collecting [do] not become more important and time consuming than the operation of the program" (p. 8).

Counseling. Writers on this topic agree that isolation and firm discipline help maintain the punitive phase of ISS whereas counseling students addresses the therapeutic aspect (Siskind et al., 1993; Opuni et al., 1991; Collins, 1985; DiSciullo, 1985; Weiss, 1983). Furthermore, as Sullivan (1989a) indicates, "Punishment without meeting students' needs for tutoring and other behavioral restructuring techniques seldom provides motivation for reform" (p. 33). Whitfield and Bulach (1996) suggest that "one element that should be included in any effective ISS model is a rehabilitative approach" (p. 4). The specific counseling strategy utilized, according to Mizell (1978), will depend on the theoretical framework within which ISS was established. Furthermore, the purpose of counseling should be: (1) to involve students in identifying and assuming some responsibility for solving the root problem that led to their misbehavior, (2) to help students confront the reasons for their own misbehaviors and that of others, (3) to help students analyze the relationship between their behavior and their short-and long-term goals, and (4) "to assist students in accepting responsibility for and in learning how to manage their behaviors and to cope more responsibly with the behavior of others" (p. 223).

DiSciullo (1984), Collins (1985), and Siskind et al. (1993) stated that in the ISS program counselling may be conducted in both small groups and individually, as the need

arises. Sullivan (1989a) suggested that counseling should be conducted "by persons who have been trained in appropriate guidance techniques, and who are knowledgeable of the student's academic and behavioral history" (p. 34). Short and Noblit (1985) reported that "some of the educators interviewed perceived casual conversation, [and] rule enforcement episodes [with ISS students] as 'counseling'" (p. 113).

Evaluation. There is overwhelming agreement in the literature reviewed that the ISS program must have an evaluation phase in order to determine if it is achieving its intended objectives (Sheets, 1996; Short, 1989; Short, 1988a; Foster & Kight, 1988; Mizell, 1978). Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) reported that "evaluation of ISS programs, in terms of both results and program structure and process, is atypical. Where conducted, such evaluations appear mostly *pro forma* and have little impact on the programs themselves" (p. 335). Mizell (1978) proposed that an interim assessment of the ISS program should be conducted at the end of each semester, and an extensive evaluation done at the end of each year. The writer went on to state that the evaluation of the program should involve classroom teachers, ISS staff, administrators, and a representative from the district office. He explained that the report should include data regarding the nature of referrals along with data on whether: a) the program has resulted in a significant reduction in suspension rate, b) students involved in ISS have improved their academic and social skills; and school attendance, c) the program has resulted in students developing greater self-discipline, d) the ISS program resulted in more parental involvement in the disciplinary process, e) the ISS program has served a broad range of students, and f) ISS has been excessively used as a disciplinary response (pp. 224 – 225).

Sullivan (1989a) indicated that evaluation should be based on pre-established program goals and objectives, and it should include both qualitative and quantitative methods. Furthermore, this writer indicates that "the existence of standardized, frequently monitored record-keeping systems significantly contributes to the effectiveness of the evaluation design and to the accuracy and thoroughness with which data are gathered" (p. 34).

Mendez and Sanders (1981) claimed that "close examination of ISS programs may reveal that their effectiveness has not been as complete as expected. Basically, the problem lies in the meaning of 'effectiveness' and the criteria used to determine such

effectiveness" (p. 65). Duke (1990) pointed out that researchers do not agree on a common conception of effectiveness. In the writer's words, "At present, some think of effectiveness in terms of creating conditions under which students who wish to learn can do so. Others judge discipline to be effective when the behavior of those who disobey rules improve" (p.43). Some studies of ISS (Harvey & Moosha, 1977; Garrett, 1981) treated effectiveness of ISS programs in terms of marked reduction in out-of-school suspension during the year in which ISS was introduced in the school. However, Lynch (1983), in a study of the Oak Grove School District, San Jose, California, reported no decrease in out-of-school suspension after ISS was initiated. Mizell (1978) concluded, "It is important to recognize that the objective of an [ISS program] must not be restricted to merely reducing the number of out-of-school suspensions" (p. 216).

Follow-up. There seems to be general agreement in the literature reviewed that monitoring students behavior after leaving the ISS program is essential (Sheets, 1996; Whitfield & Bulach, 1996; Sullivan, 1989a; DiSciullo, 1984; Weiss, 1983; Mizell, 1978). Sheets (1996) stated that the individualized model, for example, will monitor the progress of students as they proceed during the academic year. Sullivan (1989a) added that "individualized student follow-up strategies monitored through documented communication with parents, teachers, and students at pre-established intervals is one of the most important, yet this writer adds that "without planned follow-up, there is no means to assess student progress following the suspension period" (p. 34).

Leatt (1987) and Whitfield and Bulach (1996) report that in the follow-up phase liaison among the students' teachers, ISS staff, and administrators is crucial to the evaluation process. Whitfield and Bulach (1996) pointed out that "any changes in behavior can usually be seen in the classroom and reported to the ISS staff" (p. 6). Short (1988) indicated that "it will be critical for faculty to have a mechanism for receiving feedback on the program. Principals should secure faculty involvement in the evaluation of the program and follow-up changes" (p. 21).

Mizell (1978), in discussing the follow-up process, stated that one of its components should focus on finding out how successful ISS was in helping solve the root problem of the student's misbehavior. One strategy he suggests is the use of a form or card that enables each teacher who sees the student during the course of the school day to

indicate how the student was behaving in class. This form is handed in to the principal along with a copy to the ISS staff at the end of each school day. If this procedure indicates that students are continuing to have problems, then, according to Mizell (1978), short-term support from ISS staff may be necessary. "It may also be wise to plan some follow-up counselling sessions so students will be able to provide feedback as to how [they are] doing" (p. 223).

Students' progress towards stated, specific goals may also be evaluated through a follow-up procedure developed by DiSciullo (1984). This procedure includes: (1) "academic progress, (2) social progress, (3) behavioral progress, (4) parental response to the ISS program, (5) teacher response to the ISS program, (6) administrative response to the ISS program, (7) statistical recording (regarding recidivism versus adjustment) and (8) recommendations for improvement" (p. 330).

Problems

Collins (1985 a) indicated that the literature on ISS is drenched with reports of immediate successes of the innovative program, but adds that "a closer look at most findings reveal that many problems exist in type of program and, quite often, the failures are glossed over or rarely mentioned. Some that are mentioned rationalize their reasons for poor results" (p. 9). Short (1988a) noted that some teachers failed to submit assignments for their students who were referred to ISS. One reason for this is they may be angry because they "have to develop assignments for students with [whom] they have no problems but who have been referred to ISS because of problems in other classes" (p. 23). Additionally, "developing assignments for some subject areas can be problematic – an example would be industrial arts classes" (p. 23).

Cooney et al. (1981) stated that recruiting and retaining effective staff proved to be a major problem in the ISS program. These writers reason that "programs that isolate students also isolate staff from peer stimulation and support" (p. xii), and add that, in some cases, "staff who are student advocates may identify and suggest changes needed in the behavior of teachers and administrators, while such changes may be necessary and desirable, the suggestions may not be appreciated" (p. xii).

Another problem encountered was centered on student attendance. There was

some indication in the literature that students tend not to attend ISS programs that were punitive. In contrast, Mizell (1978) reported that "some schools have found that because of the personality of the [ISS teacher], and because students in the program usually receive more individual attention and care than in the regular classroom" (p. 220) students continued to misbehave in order to be reassigned to ISS.

Other problems mentioned by Cooney et al. (1981) include: "maintaining financial support for the program, lack of understanding and support for program goals by regular classroom teachers, and inconsistency in the reasons for student assignment to the program" (pp. xii - xiii). Nielsen (1979 a) indicated that assigning too many students at once to ISS created a problem.

Studies of ISS Programs

Johnson (1991) believes that "the effectiveness of ISS programs ranged from less than effective to very effective" (p. 69). Studies which show the range of effectiveness are reported below.

Simon (1994) studied the ISS program in the middle, intermediate high, and senior high schools of the Coatesville Area School District in the United States. He found that: (1) students and assistant principals perceive ISS to be an aversive consequence while a large majority of faculty members believed that ISS was not aversive, (2) "a majority of students previously referred to ISS, and assistant principals indicated that the program does have a positive impact on student behavior, [while] faculty members believe the program does not encourage adherence to school rules" (p. 2420A), (3) students and administrators believe that students maintain continuity with their work while assigned to ISS, while faculty members believe the opposite, and (4) "a majority of students assigned to ISS experienced one or two referrals to [the] program" (p. 2420A).

Hochman (1986) sought to determine if differences existed between ISS students who received counseling and ISS students who received no counseling, regarding recidivism to ISS for disciplinary problems, academic performance (GPA), school attendance, and tardiness to class, in an urban high school in the United States. The data indicated that

> ISS students who received the specific counseling intervention, when compared to ISS students who received no specific counseling intervention, exhibited significant reductions in recidivism for inappropriate behavior, significant differences in grade-point average, a significantly higher attendance rate, and a reduction in their tardiness" (pp. 363-364A).

Additionally, Hochman (1986) found that teachers, guidance counselors and ISS students perceived the ISS program positively.

Sampson (1985) examined the North Babylon ISS program "in terms of such features as program, content, support, staffing, referral process, evaluative procedures, philosophy and goals; and second, [analyzed] the effectiveness of the program in terms of attendance, recidivism, and attainment of graduation" (p. 2654A). She found that the attendance of ISS students did not improve during the three year period of the study; that ISS did play a role in reducing recidivism; that ISS increased the suspended student's chances of graduating; and that more strengths than weaknesses of the program were identified; and "that the program had a significant impact upon improving the behavior of the average student and little affect upon the hardcore student" (p. 2654A).

Moore (1990) found that 68% of the middle and junior high schools in a stratified random sample of 322 schools in the North Central Association in the United States had ISS programs, and approximately two-thirds of these programs had a counseling component. Only 26 percent of the administrators responding reported having an evaluation plan for their programs. Programs with a counseling component tended to use parents and counselors in the planning stage, and counselors as part of the staff of ISS. Moore (1990) "concluded that the theory of ISS as a means to help students develop self-discipline, make positive changes, and improve their attitudes toward school is not what is being practice by a majority of schools" (p. 1855 A). Additionally, the researcher noted that a number of programs were narrow in scope and were more punitive than rehabilitative.

Haupt (1987) conducted a study of the effectiveness of ISS programs as perceived by 345 principals of secondary school with grades nine through twelve, in Pennsylvania. Based on the findings of the study, Haupt (1987) concluded that ISS programs are a viable disciplinary technique because they were most effective in reducing out-of-school

suspensions, and are "considerably effective in providing classroom atmospheres conducive to learning, in meeting the individual needs of 'disruptive' or 'uncooperative' students and in reducing the number of discipline problems and expulsions" (p. 266 A). She also noted that the selection of personnel to implement the program is important. The administration of the program, administrative support of the program, as well as "clearly defined rules and regulations, the isolation of suspended students from other students, the completion of regular assignments, the provision of remedial work, the limited number of students and the cooperation of the entire staff" (p. 266 A) are factors that Haupt (1987) identified as contributing to the effectiveness of ISS programs.

Based on the findings of the study of the evolution of ISS in three selected school districts in Virginia, Sullivan (1988) inferred that:

1. Exhaustive research is a valid prerequisite to planning and implementing an ISS program;
2. ISS cannot serve as a genuinely positive disciplinary alternative unless the focus of the program is rehabilitative;
3. Clearly defined, measurable objectives are key elements in a successful ISS program, and these objectives should correlate with the stated philosophy of the program; and, in the researcher's words,
4. "ISS loses its effectiveness when used as a consequence for all varieties of offenses. When established as a part of an overall disciplinary plan, ISS is not employed as a first response to minor behavior problems" (p. 184).

Johnson's (1991) research on ISS programs in secondary schools in Colorado indicated that opposition to these programs was based on lack of money and facilities. The researcher found that parent involvement and support for ISS programs were not well established, and most students were referred to ISS for one day, bringing up the issue regarding adequate time to address causes of misbehavior. In addition, the researcher found the following:

> Most school personnel were involved to some extent in the development of ISS programs, with parents and students being involved minimally or not at all. There was a discrepancy between one of the primary stated goals of most ISS programs, to modify inappropriate behavior, and the actual attention

devoted to positive behavior change. Noticeably lacking in most ISS programs were active tutoring and counseling. Systematic follow-up support with students after they left ISS was missing. Systematic evaluation of ISS programs was not well established in ISS programs. (p. 1153 A)

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework which guided the design of the study was based on a review of the literature on ISS with specific reference to the works of Short (1988a), Sullivan (1988), and Johnson (1991). Short's (1988a) work suggested that the framework for ISS should consist of:

1. The ways in which ISS programs have been developed and implemented.
2. The prevailing philosophies in the schools regarding how students learn to behave.
3. Concerns regarding what the school wants the ISS programs to achieve.
4. The notion that although ISS programs may, according to Short (1988a), differ from school to school "they appear to fall within three theoretical orientations. These orientations under-gird the three models of ISS programs and provide those planning such programs several ways of considering what their particular program should look like." (pp. 7-8)

Figure 2.1 shows the relationship among the concepts which have been identified. The main foci of this framework are the participants, the stated philosophy and goals, and the characteristics of the ISS models. The open nature of the framework along with the absence of feedback loops should be noted. Various feedback loops were omitted in order to simplify the design and focus data collection.

McNamara (1986) pointed out that while many theorists, researchers and educators trumpet the use of ISS in lieu of suspension from school they also realize that it is not the ultimate answer to all discipline problems. Scholars are still searching for ways to improve and make ISS a positive and preventive disciplinary strategy. According to Mizell (1979; cited in Sullivan, 1988) it is important to realize there is no perfect ISS program, however exemplary program do exist.

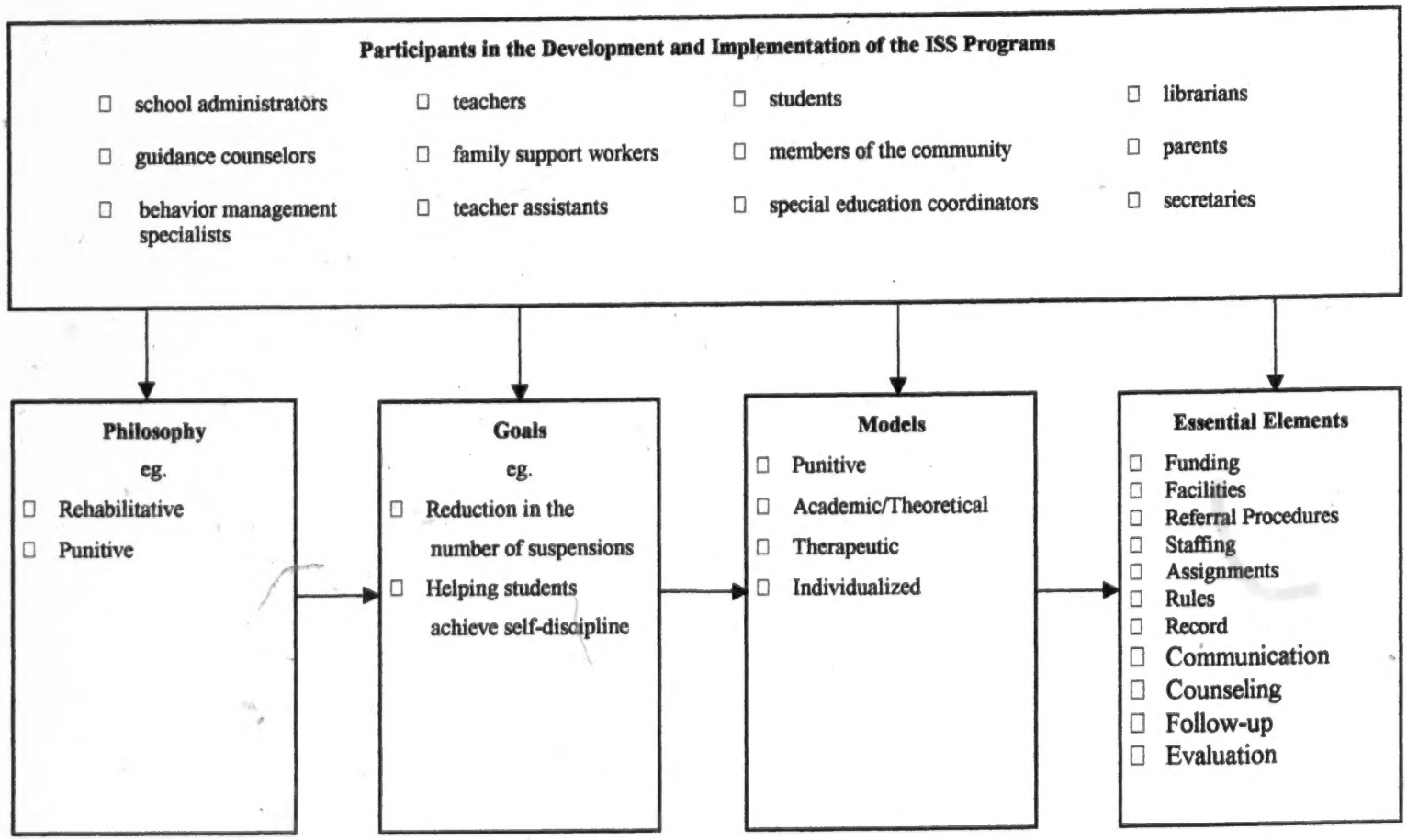

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of ISS Programs

Summary

Topics selected for the literature review provide a theoretical base for the study, while the conceptual framework was developed to guide the collection and analysis of data. The major themes selected for review included organizational characteristics of schools, out-of-school suspension and its consequences, and ISS. In the area of organizational characteristics, what constitutes organizational characteristics of schools – school and class size, and rules – were discussed. School and class size – the number of students and employees per unit – may contribute to student behavior problems. Hyman et al. (1997) and Adams (1987) argued that students, teachers, parents, and members of the community should participate in the formulation of school-wide rules. Others, Jones and Jones (1998), and Emmer et al. (2003) believe that students should be involved in developing classroom rules. Adams (1987) felt that rules should not be detailed and specific, instead they should be short and simply expressed. Regarding the number of school and classroom rules, Short, Short and Blanton (1994), Porter (1996), and Jones (1998) noted that they should be kept to a minimum; fewer rules may lead to fewer behavior problems. Porter (1996) also indicated that students should be aware that their behavior has consequences, and according to Short, Short and Blanton (1994) when consequences are used appropriately they provide an essential medium for teaching students self-monitoring and self-correction of behavior.

Hyman et al. (1997) pointed out that "acquiescence, trivialization, and [faculty] cover-ups of students maltreatment can create a climate that increases student anger, aggression, violence, and criminal behaviors" (p. 319). MacDonald (1995) reported that "over one-half of the students were dissatisfied with the way victims of school violence were treated" (p. 74).

Duke and Seidman (1982) contend that the dysfunctional behavior of students can be lessened by changing the way in which schools are organized rather than attempting the difficult task of changing students directly. Duke (1990) said that no single organizational strategy can be said to work in all schools.

The frequent use of suspension has lessened its impact on students. Sweeney-Rader et al. (1980) suggested that suspension has failed to change the behavior of students, in fact it encourages students "acting out." Wu et al. (1982) reported that one

can better predict whether a student will be suspended by knowing nothing about the student and knowing how frequently other students in that particular school have been suspended.

Parents/guardians or students themselves, if they are 18 years of age or older, have the right to appeal suspension. However, according to Galloway et al. (1982) the right of appeal offers parents and suspendees no safeguards, in fact the cards are stacked against them. Ling (1984) indicated that the suspension panel is most likely to rubber stamp decisions taken at the school.

ISS is a disciplinary alternative to suspension from school. The rationales for developing ISS in schools are diverse, and yet similar in nature. Mizell (1978) stated that the goals of ISS should be based on a philosophy which suggests that school officials have a great responsibility to students, and that discipline in schools goes beyond punishment and control. The key components of ISS programs are: adequate financial support, an ISS room and materials, staffing, communication, assignments, reason for and length of referral to ISS, daily operational procedures, record keeping, counseling, evaluation, and follow-up. Scholars have identified three quite distinct models of ISS programs – the punitive, the academic or theoretical and the therapeutic – and a fourth – the individualized – that adopts components of the other three. Additionally, in terms of the effectiveness of ISS programs, Collins (1985a) indicated that the literature seems to be drenched with reports of immediate success, but a closer examination of the research findings reveal that many problems exist.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of the study was to explore and describe the characteristics of the ISS programs in the public and separate schools, which contain any of the grades 7 through 12, in three urban centres in Alberta. The framework for data collection, the survey research methodology and data collection procedures, access to the research sites, the population, reliability, validity, ethical considerations, and data analysis procedures form the content of this chapter.

Framework for Data Collection

Figure 2.1 shows the relationship among the variables which were identified in the literature review, and are pertinent to the study. The framework was simplified to focus it on the data collection. Additionally, the framework's open nature along with the absence of feedback loops are acknowledged by the researcher.

Survey Research and Data Collection Procedures

To obtain information relative to the research questions, the survey method was employed. Survey research, according to Babbie (1995), is

> probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly. Careful probability sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics may be taken to reflect those of the larger population, and carefully constructed standardized questionnaires provide data in the same form from all respondents. (p. 257).

Babbie (1995) points out that the survey method, like other methods of observation in social scientific research, have strengths and weaknesses, and "full awareness of the inherent or probable weaknesses can partially resolve them in some cases" (p. 274). Kerlinger (1986) stated that "surveys can be classified by the following methods of obtaining information: personal interview, mail questionnaire, panel, and telephone. Of these, the personal interview far overshadows the others as perhaps the most powerful and useful tool of social scientific survey research" (pp. 378-379). This study utilized

questionnaires, the semi-structured personal interview, document analysis, and keeping a journal in the data collection process. These data–collection strategies will be discuss below.

The Mail-out Questionnaire

Mailed questionnaires have special strengths. The strengths as outlined by Babbie (1998) are: (a) questionnaires, especially self-administered make large samples feasible; (b) in a sense, they are flexible, for example, many questions may be asked on a particular topic, giving the researcher considerable flexibility in analysis, and (c) they have an important strength in regard to measurement generally. Survey researchers must, not only be able to define concepts in ways most relevant to their research goals, but must also apply the same definitions uniformly to all subjects. They are "bound to this requirement by having to ask exactly the same questions of all subjects and having to impute the same intent to all respondents giving a particular response" (p. 273).

Mangione (1998), lending support for the use of mail-out questionnaires, noted the following advantages of mail surveys:

- They are relatively inexpensive.
- They allow respondents to take their time in answering and to look up information if they need to.
- They give privacy in responding
- They allow for visual rather than merely auditory input.
- They allow respondents to answer questions at times that are convenient.
- They allow respondents to see the context of a series of questions.
- They insulate respondents from the expectations of an interviewer.

In addition, Mangione (1998) explains that mail surveys are a good choice when: (a) you have limited human resources to help you conduct your study, (b) your questions are written in a closed-ended style, (c) your research sample has a moderate to high investment in the topic, and (d) your list of research objectives is modest in length (pp. 399-400).

The mail-out questionnaire also has several weaknesses. Kerlinger (1986) indicated that responses to questionnaires are generally poor, and this drawback is serious

enough to render it useless. Specifically, "returns of less than 40 or 50 percent are common. Higher percentages are rare" (p. 380). Babbie's (1998) rule of thumb regarding return rates states, "A response rate of 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting. A response of 60% is good. And a response rate of 70% is very good" (p. 262). However, he cautioned that these figures were only rough guides with no statistical basis.

Best and Kahn (1993) pointed out that "it is difficult to estimate, in abstract, what percentage of the questionnaire responses is to be considered adequate" (p. 242). Newman (2000), lending support, claimed that "adequate' is a judgment call that depends on the population, practical limitations, the topic, and the response with which specific researchers feel comfortable" (p. 267). Best and Kahn (1993) also indicated that "the importance of the project, the quality of the questionnaire, the care used in selecting recipients, the time of the year, and many other factors may be significant in determining the proportion of responses" (p. 242).

Babbie (2002) noted that: (a) the requirement for standardization of questionnaires "often seems to result in the fitting of round pegs into square holes. Standardized questionnaire items often represent the least-common denominator in assessing people's attitudes, orientation, circumstances, and experiences" (p. 272); and (b) although questionnaires can provide information in the context of social life "the survey researcher rarely develops the feel for the total life situation in which respondents are thinking and acting, that, say, the participant observer can" (p. 273).

The ISS Questionnaire. To explore and describe the characteristics of the ISS programs in schools, it was necessary to design instruments specifically for that purpose. The first of these instruments was the questionnaire.

After an extensive search of the literature, the researcher constructed a closed form In-School Suspension questionnaire, which was based mainly on the work of Sullivan (1988) and Johnson (1991). The instrument contained three sections: Section A sought background information; Section B was sub-divided into 12 parts – planning and implementation, funding, philosophy, goals and effectiveness, referral to ISS, facilities, staffing, rules and procedures, assignments, record, counseling and follow-up – and contained four open-ended questions along with questions that used a Likert-type scale;

and Section C had open-ended questions. A copy of the 48-item ISS questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

Gall' Borg and Gall (1996) and Mangione (1998) reported that researchers have found that contacting participants before mailing them questionnaires increases the response rate. Pre-notification, according to Gall et al. (1996), "involves the researchers identifying themselves, discussing the purpose of the study, requesting cooperation" (p. 299), and "warning" respondents to keep their eyes open for the arrival of questionnaires in the mail in a week or two. "The pre-contact can take the form of a letter, postcard, or telephone call, but some evidence suggests that telephone contacts are most effective" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 299).

A total of 139 schools were telephoned during March through June 2000, and a brief telephone audience was sought with either the principal or vice-principal, to discuss the study. However, due to the administrators' busy schedule and the researcher's financial and time limitations, the researcher was unable to make telephone contact with all principals or vice-principals. A total of 124 principals or vice-principals were contacted by telephone. After explaining the purpose of the study and briefly defining *In-School Suspension,* their cooperation was requested. Eighty-eight schools expressed willingness to complete the ISS questionnaires, four declined to take part in the study, and 32 stated that they did not have an ISS program. The number of questionnaires that was mailed to the principal or vice-principal of each school that had an ISS program, and was willing to take part in the study was negotiated during the pre-notification telephone conversation. One to ten questionnaires were mailed to these schools. Although the mailing of the questionnaires was staggered, the code number on each enabled the researcher to keep a record, for the purpose of follow-ups with non-respondents.

The questionnaires, covering letters (see Appendix E), *Interview Consent Forms* (see Appendix F), and a stamped self-addressed envelope were mailed to the principal or vice-principal, and he or she was not only asked to complete a questionnaire, but also to distribute the relevant items to a sample of staff members who where involved in the ISS program. The sample included personnel who supervised, referred, administered, counseled, or sent assignments for ISS students to complete. However, the vice-principal of a junior-senior high school had one of the students complete a questionnaire. The

researcher had no control over the distribution of the questionnaires to participants in the various schools. Respondents were also asked to return the completed questionnaire, in the envelope provided, by a given date (14 days after the mailing date), to the principal or vice-principal who then forwarded these completed questionnaires to the researcher in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided.

The first round resulted in the mailing of 386 questionnaires. Regarding returns, 41 (10.6%) were unusable. Of this total, four questionnaires were partially filled out (answers were provided for the first four or 14 items), and one was filled out by the vice-principal of the elementary section of an elementary-junior high school. Additionally, 36 questionnaires with all items unanswered were returned by seven schools that declined to take part in the study. Four subjects provided reasons for declining. One principal declined because she thought the study was unclear, while another principal stated that upon receiving the questionnaires it became apparent that the occasional ISS applied to some students did not, in any way, resemble a program. It was also stated by a principal that his school had very few serious discipline problems, and ISS and OSS were rarely used, and, when used, they were usually used in an informal manner. Continuing, the principal noted that as a result 95% of the items on the questionnaires were irrelevant to his school's situation. The length of the survey questionnaire and the short period of time to return the completed questionnaires were of great concern to one principal. He further stated that his staff was currently very busy with report cards, parent-teacher interviews, and all other on-going responsibilities, and it would be an unnecessary infringement and real imposition to ask them to fill out questionnaires at that time. However, a first round total of 161 usable returns (42%) were received.

A week after the deadline for returns from the initial mailing, follow-up packets containing a second covering letter, copies of the questionnaire, *Interview Consent Forms,* and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were mailed to non-respondents. All follow-up questionnaires had new code numbers, and this enabled the researcher to differentiate between the first and second mailings. The follow-up mailings resulted in additional 15 completed, usable returns, thereby increasing the number of usable returns to 176 (46%).

Participants indicated their willingness to take part in follow-up interviews by

signing and returning the *Interview Consent Forms* along with the completed questionnaires.

During pre-notification telephone conversations, principals or vice-principals who stated that their schools did not have an ISS program were asked to select two reasons from a list of six that best described why their school did not have an ISS program. (The list of reasons is included in Appendix D). No further information was sought from these participants. As mentioned earlier, also during pre-notification, four schools declined to take part in the study. These schools went on to provide one or both of the following two reasons for doing so: 1) "We don't have time, and 2) We are swamped, too many questionnaires to fill out."

Semi-Structured Interview

Berg (1995) describes the semi-structured or semi-standardized interview as being "located somewhere between the extremes of completely standardized and completely un-standardized interviewing structures" (p. 33). Kvale (1996) noted that the semi-structured interview has

> a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as suggested questions. Yet at the same time there is an openness to changes of sequence and form of questions in order to follow up the answers given and the stories told by the subjects (p. 124).

Furthermore, Kavale (1996) adds, the semi-structured interview "is an interpersonal situation, a conversation between two partners about a theme of mutual interest. It is a specific form of human interaction in which knowledge evolves through a dialogue" (p. 125).

Patton (2002) postulated that the purpose of interviewing is

> to find out what is in and on someone else's mind, to gather their stories. We cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people

> questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective (p. 341).

According to Babbie (1998) interviewing has several advantages. He suggested the following four:

1. Interview surveys typically attain higher response rates than mail surveys. A properly designed and executed interview survey ought to achieve a completion rate of at least 80 to 85 percent.
2. The presence of an interviewer generally decreases the number of "don't knows" and "no answers."
3. If the respondent clearly misunderstands the intent of a question or indicates that he or she does not understand, the interviewer can clarify matters, thereby obtaining relevant responses.
4. The interviewer can observe respondents as well as ask questions. (p. 264)

The interview also has several weaknesses. Patton (2002) observed that "interview data can be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time of the interview. Interview data are also subject to recall error, reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer, and self-serving responses" (p. 306). In addition, Seidman (1998) stated that in the interviewing relationship the interviewers and participants are never equal, usually both parties have different purposes. However, in spite of this, researchers can still strive for equity in the process. Seidman (1998) explains, "Being equitable in interviewing research means: (1) valuing the words of the participant's sense of worth, and (2) infusing a research methodology with respect for the dignity of those interviewed" (p. 93). Seidman (1998) also pointed out that interviewing is especially labor intensive, and sometimes costly. Additionally, in face-to-face interviews "race, gender, class, and the relative ages of the participant and the interviewer may affect the type of relationship that develops between them" (pp. 88-89).

Interview schedule. A semi-structured interview schedule with eleven open-ended questions was constructed to facilitate the collection of data on the issue under investigation (see Appendix B). Patton (2002) claimed, "The interview guide provides a framework within which the interviewer would develop questions, sequence those questions, and make decisions about which information to pursue in greater depth" (p.

344). Additionally, the author indicated that the interviewer normally would not be expected to explore totally new topics that were not included in the framework of the interview guide. Yet, Patton (2002) states "Other topics might still emerge during the interview, topics of importance to the respondent that are not listed explicitly on the guide and therefore, would not normally be explored with each person interviewed" (p. 344). Seidman (1998) warns that interviewers must avoid manipulating participants to respond to an interview guide, explaining also that interviewers using "an interview guide must allow for the possibility that what may interest them or other participants may be of little interest to the person being interviewed. Interview guides can be useful but must be used with caution" (p. 77).

Forty respondents expressed their willingness to be interviewed. Regarding sample size Kvale (1996) noted that "in current interview studies, the number of interviews tend to be around 15 ± 10. This number may be due to a combination of the time and resources available for the investigation and of the law of diminishing returns" (p. 102). Patton (2002) indicated that in qualitative inquiry there are no rules for sample size. "Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (p. 244). Furthermore, Patton (2002) adds that conducting interviews until a point of saturation "is an ideal, one that works best for basic research, unlimited time lines, and unconstrained resources" (p. 246). Because of financial constraints and a time line, it was not possible to interview all 40 volunteers. Hence, a stratified purposeful sample of eleven participants was selected for a 30 – 45 minute audio-taped, face-to-face individual interview.

The selected, stratified, purposeful sample of interviewees for this study adhered to at least one of the following criteria:

- Job title – principal, vice-principal, teacher, Special Education teacher, guidance counselor, and behavior management specialist
- Representative from each of the three cities
- Employed in a public or separate school
- Employed in a school with or without a behavior management program
- Employed in a school with an ISS program that was less than or more than a year old

- Employed in a school with an informal or formal ISS program

Patton (2002) stated that "the purpose of a stratified purposeful sample is to capture major variations rather than to identify a common core, although the latter may also emerge in the analysis" (p. 240).

On-site interviews were arranged with participants, according to their schedule. On the day of the interview, before the interview officially began, the interviewee was given a covering letter, signed by the researcher, explaining the nature of the study, the data collection procedure, use that would be made of the data, and further promising confidentiality and anonymity.

In reference to the tape-recording of interviews, Patton (2002) stated that the tape recorder increases the accuracy of data collection. However, "the use of the tape recorder does not eliminate the need for taking notes, but does allow [the interviewer] to concentrate on taking strategic and focused notes, rather than attempting verbatim notes." (p. 383). It also permits the interviewer to be more attentive to the interviewee. The researcher also made notes during the various interviews. Seidman (1998), lending support to Patton's (2002) argument regarding the taping of the interview, pointed out that the tape recorder does not inhibit participants, instead they soon get used to the device.

Access to Research Sites

The Cooperative Activities Program Research Project Application form was filled out and submitted to the Associate Dean's office, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. Permission to conduct the study was sought from all four school districts listed on the form. Approval to conduct the proposed research was granted by three of the districts, the fourth did not respond to the researcher's request.

A letter requesting permission to conduct the study (see Appendix C) along with copies of the ISS questionnaire and interview schedule were mailed to the Superintendent of Schools of five other urban school districts in Alberta. Four districts agreed to participate in the study while the fifth stated that schools in its jurisdiction did not have a formal ISS program. After receiving this information in the mail, the Director of Secondary Instructional Services for that district was contacted by telephone, and was

asked to select two reasons from a list of six provided by the researcher, why schools in her district did not have an ISS program. (The item and the list of responses are included in Appendix D). The two reasons suggested by the director were: 1) Principals lack personnel to supervise ISS, and 2) Schools lack the necessary classrooms for ISS. However, the director also mentioned a school that had an ISS program. The principal of this school was contacted by telephone and he agreed to participate in the study, but was appointed to another position within the district before completing the ISS questionnaire. His replacement also agreed to complete the questionnaire, and in a follow-up telephone conversation the researcher learned that the completed questionnaire had been mailed to the researcher. However, the researcher did not receive it, and as a result the school was omitted from the study.

The Population

The population in this study was selected from the directory, prepared by Educational Information Services of Alberta Learning (1999), which identified all private, public, and separate schools in Alberta. Schools included in the study were those identified by Educational Information Services (1999) as elementary/junior high, middle, junior high, junior high/high, high, and elementary/high which contained any of the grades 7 through 12. As previously mentioned, 139 schools were contacted by telephone, however, the researcher was unable to gain a telephone audience with all the principals or vice-principals of these schools. The researcher gained an audience with 124 principals or vice-principals by telephone, and 88 schools expressed willingness to take part in the study, 32 stated that they did have an ISS program, and four declined to take part in the study.

Reliability

Best and Kahn (1993) noted that reliability "refers to the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates" (p. 208). Additionally, the authors stated that it was difficult to determine reliability for data-gathering instruments or procedures such as the use of the questionnaire or interviews, "in which responses are more qualitative and yield data that are not always readily quantifiable. They suggest, "One should attempt to improve the reliability of the procedure, but precise determination of

the degree to which [it is] achieved is often elusive" (p. 208).

Kerlinger (1986) asserted that "to be interpretable, a test must be reliable .... Reliability, while not the most important facet of measurement, is still extremely important. High reliability is no guarantee of good scientific result, but there can be no good scientific results without reliability" (p. 415). Additionally, Boyatzis (1998) explained that:

> Reliability is critical in using thematic analysis .... It is not verification, which is a pure positivistic notion. It affects the potential utility of the code and the research findings that result from the use of the code. It affects the potential for replication, extension, and generalization of the research. Validity of the findings cannot conceptually exceed the reliability of the judgments made in coding or processing the raw information (p. 144).

To ensure clarity of statement, comprehensiveness, and appropriateness a preliminary draft of the ISS questionnaire was distributed to the following for critical review:

1. Six professors in the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta.
2. Ten graduate students in the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta. These graduate students were teachers or school administrators.

The criticisms that were made by the above respondents focused on the format, the need for precise terms, exclusion of unnecessary elements, inclusion of necessary components, grammar, and overall improvements to the instrument. In consideration of the constructive criticisms from these individuals, modifications to the questionnaire were made.

Two graduate students in the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, critically reviewed the interview schedule. In addition, an audio taped pilot interview was conducted and it indicated that: (a) the researcher needed to refine his interviewing techniques, (b) some questions had to be re-phrased, and (c) the interview would last approximately 45 minutes. The interview guide was revised on the basis of the comments made by the respondents and the findings of the pilot study.

Although statistical tests of reliability are available (example test-retest) the ISS questionnaire was not subjected to such because of the exploratory nature of the study, as well as time constraints in the collection of data.. However, according to Babbie (1998), "careful wording of the questions can reduce significantly the subject's own unreliability" (p. 274). In addition Kerlinger (1986) suggested that "great care must always be taken in writing instructions. Clear and standard instructions tend to reduce errors of measurement" (p. 415).

Validity

Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) stated that:

> Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences researchers make based on the data they collect .... An appropriate inference would be one that says something about the measuring of the information obtained through the use of an instrument .... [Finally], a useful inference is one that helps researchers make decisions related to what they were trying to find out (pp. 169, 170).

Walcott (1995; cited in Janesick, 2000) pointed out that the term validity, which is over-specified in the quantitative domain has become confusing because it was reassigned to the qualitative domain. In qualitative research, according to Walcott validity "has to do with description and explanation and whether or not the explanation fits the description .... Qualitative researchers do not claim that there is only one way of interpreting an event. There is no one 'correct' interpretation" (p. 393). Seidman (1991) claimed that "by interviewing a number of participants, [researchers] can connect their experiences and check the comments of one participant against those of others" (p. 17). The writer went on to state that "if the interview structure works to allow [participants] to make sense to themselves as well as to the interviewer, then it has gone a long way towards validity" (p. 17).

Multiple methods of data collection are often used by researchers to increase the validity of the data collected. In this study data were collected by means of questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, and documentary analysis. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) further noted that "the quality of the instruments used in research is very

important, for the conclusions researchers draw are based on the information they obtain using these instruments" (p. 169). With this in mind the researcher selected several strategies – a review of the pertinent literature, a pre-test of the questionnaire and interview schedule, and held conversations about ISS with principals and fellow graduate students – to increase the validity of the research instruments.

Prior to transcribing the audio-taped interviews the transcriber was asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement form (see Appendix G). The eleven interviews were accurately transcribed, then returned to the interviewees, by mail, for verification. Each transcript was accompanied by a covering letter advising interviewees that they had the option to make modifications, corrections, or additions to the document. Interviewees were also asked to share the modifications with the researcher, by a certain date, through the mail in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. The researcher did not receive any copies of transcripts which contained modifications or corrections.

Ethical Considerations

In January, 2000 a *Research Ethics Review Application* outlining the following: (a) the purpose of the study, (b) the nature of involvement of human participation, and (c) procedures to address anonymity and confidentiality, was submitted to, and approved by the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta. Specifically, participants were assured, in the covering letter that accompanied the ISS questionnaire, that: (a) the University's ethical guidelines would be strictly maintained, (b) participation in the study is voluntary, and all subjects have the option to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any time, without any risk or penalty, (c) no deception of any kind would be used in the study, (d) all information would be treated confidentially, and (e) the final report will not identify any person, school, or school jurisdiction by name.

All audio-taped interviews were stored in a secure place which was accessible to no one but the researcher. These tapes were also transcribed and saved on diskettes. All interviewees remained anonymous except to the researcher, and pseudonyms are used in this document when referring to participants. Interviewees were also informed that the researcher would seek their permission before quoting extensively from the transcript, in the dissertation. At the conclusion of the study (after the final defense of the dissertation)

the audio-taped interviews would be obliterated.

Data Analysis

As already indicated, data were collected by means of questionnaire, documents, and interviews from March through June 2000, and were subjected to statistical analysis and the winnowing process, both provided below.

Statistical Analysis of the Questionnaire Data

The purposes of the study were to explore and describe the various ISS programs in use in public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 to 12, in three urban centers in Alberta, and to identify factors which were perceived to support or inhibit success of the programs. Statistical analysis of the questionnaire data was undertaken first. Specifically, the questionnaire data were tabulated by computer to determine frequency counts, and percentages of the population that selected each response. Where applicable, means for the questionnaire items were calculated.

Winnowing Process

Written responses to the open-ended questions on the questionnaires, and oral responses to the semi-structured interviews along with documents and journal notes were analyzed on the basis of emergent themes. The analyses of these data were conducted in two phases – preliminary and post interview. Additionally, relevant comments made by the respondents were used by the researcher to enhance and supplement statistical findings.

Preliminary analysis. Analysis of the recorded interviews began during the data collection phase, and upon receiving completed portions of the statistical analyzed questionnaire data. Shortly after each interview, the researcher listened to the tape and made notes about the various issues identified. Additionally, during the interview phase, preliminary analysis was undertaken of journal notes and documents that were provided.

Post-interview analysis. This phase began after all interview data were collected and transcribed. Statistical analysis of the questionnaire data and analysis of the responses to the open-ended questionnaire items were completed in this phase.

Document Analysis

According to Best and Kahn (1993) "documents are an important source of data in many areas of investigation" (p. 191), and one of the purposes of documentary analysis is of a descriptive research nature. Patton (1990) pointed out that

> document data may reveal things that have taken place before the [study] began. They may include private interchange to which the [researcher] would not otherwise be privy. They can reveal goals or decisions that might be unknown to the [researcher].... They also provide stimulus for generating questions that can only be pursued through direct observation and interviewing. (p. 235)

The documents made available to the researcher included a copy of each of the following: the students' handbook, learning packets, an incident statement form, Turning Point Program, Code of Behavior, students' behavior contract, Behavioral Referral Process, Time-out Room program, The School Discipline Plan, and Positive Choices. These documents were dated 1994, 1998, or 2000-2001, and they were analyzed on the basis of themes related to the issues identified in the literature reviewed, and the emergent theme from the interview data and comments made by participants on the questionnaires. Attention was also paid to pertinent data in the document for validation of responses to the questionnaires and the interviews.

The Journal

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stated that field notes are "the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on data in a qualitative study" (pp. 110-111). Richardson (1998) suggested that there were four categories of field notes – observation, methodological, theoretical, and personal. However, Bogdan and Biklen (2003) stated that

> field notes consist of two kinds of materials. The first is descriptive – the concern is to provide a word-picture of the setting, people, actions, and conversations as observed. The other is reflective – the part that captures more of the observer's frame of mind, ideas, and concerns (p. 112).

These two types of field notes are similar to Observation and Personal notes mentioned

by Richardson (1998).

In this study the researcher made both descriptive and reflective field notes. Face-to-face interactions with participants were recorded in the journal, and shortly after each interview, while the information was still firm in the researcher's mind, time was further spent listening to the taped interview and making notes about the interviewee's responses and comments.

Patton (2002) and Seidman (1998) noted that qualitative methods generate voluminous data, and this amount of text, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), has to be reduced. Some of the strategies suggested by Patton (2002), Dey (1993), and Seidman (1998) were used to analyze the interview data.

Seidman (1998) asserted that "the first step in reducing the text is to read it and mark with brackets the passages that are interesting" (p. 100). He also added that "what is of essential interest is embedded in each research topic and will arise from each transcript. The interviewer must affirm his or her own ability to recognize it" (p. 101).

Dey (1993) claimed that in qualitative data analysis grouping data is typically done "through the development of a set of categories, with each category expressing a criterion (or set of criteria) for distinguishing some observations from others, as similar or related in some particular respect(s)" (p. 96). His list of resources for generating categories includes the data itself, "initial or emergent research questions, substantive policy and theoretical issues, [and the researcher's] imagination, intuition and previous knowledge" (p. 100). He further indicated that at the outset researchers, in general,

> may prefer to use broad categories to avoid prejudicing subsequent analysis and perhaps even precluding particular lines of development. It is important not to close off options at this stage by making distinctions which are not based on a thorough review of all the relevant data (p. 105).

Patton (1990) suggested that the first decision a researcher should make when analyzing interview data "is whether to begin with case analysis or cross-case analysis. If a standardized open-ended interview is used, it is fairly easy to do cross-case analysis for each question in the interview" (p. 376). However, when an interview guide approach is adopted, although responses from various interviewees "can be grouped by topics from the guide, the relevant data won't be found in the same place in each interview" (p. 376).

After re-reading the eleven interview transcripts and the descriptive and reflective journal notes, key ideas arising out of them were summarized and categorized. The emerging themes, outlined in Table 3.1, were used in the analysis of the data.

Table 3.1
Themes Generated to Organize Qualitative Data

Strengths of ISS • Nature of the program • Kept students in school • Had staff, students, and parents support • Encouraged self-discipline • Protected rights • Counseling	**Weakness of ISS** • Ineffective with some students • Facilities and resources • Students and time issues • Staffing • Assignments • Over-all issues
Daily Operation • Communication of referral to staff • Communication of referral to parents • Student self-referral • ISS classroom rules • Assisted student with assignment • Remedial work • Counseling by administrator • Counseling by teacher • Counseling by teacher's assistant • Counseling by guidance counselor	**Referral to ISS** • Clearly stated guidelines • Unclear guidelines • Absence of guidelines • Self-referral • School rules • Change of consequences • Escalation in length of referral • Well communicated guidelines • Poorly communicated guidelines • Parent(s) contest referral
Effectiveness of ISS • Reduction in the number of repeaters • Created problems • Caught-up on assignments • Addressing reasons for referral	**ISS is part of over-all discipline** • Teachers' strategies • School's philosophy • Positive consequences • Negative consequences
Evaluation • Informal • Undecided about format	**Philosophy** • Custodial • Freedom with control
Suggestions for improving ISS	
• Students • Staffing issues • Parental involvement • Over-all strategies	• ISS facilities • Communication • Referral

Summary

This chapter began with a brief discussion of the framework for data collection. In this study quantitative and qualitative (interviews, document analysis, and journal keeping) methodologies were employed. The chapter also presented the steps taken to: a) gain access to the research sites, and b) assure reliability and validity. With respect to reliability, part of the process involved pilot testing the questionnaire and interview schedule, then making modifications to the instruments. Multiple methods of data collection were used to increase the validity of the data collected. The transcribed interviews were also returned to the interviewees for verification. Following that the process for fulfilling the ethical requirements of the study was presented. Finally, a description of the data collection procedures, and the methods used to analyze the data were discussed.

CHAPTER 4

THE FINDINGS

The study sought to examine and describe: a) the characteristics of the ISS programs in schools which contain any of the grades from 7 to 12, in the public and separate school districts in three urban centers in Alberta, and b) to identify factors which were perceived to support or inhibit the success of the programs. The findings regarding the research questions, which guided the study, were reported for the sample as a whole. However, during analysis of the interview data new themes emerged that either expanded upon or did not "fit" the categories – participants in the development and implementation of ISS, philosophy, goals, models, and elements – which were identified in the model discussed in Chapter 2. Emergent themes which did not "fit" these categories were presented separately.

The information sources for the study were school documents, ISS questionnaires, and interviews, which were conducted with 11 purposefully selected school personnel. The findings, which included comments made by participants, were presented in narrative description and tabular form.

The chapter begins with an overview of the mailing of the questionnaires and a discussion of the demographics. This is followed by a presentation of the findings under: a) the categories identified in the model, and b) emergent themes. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Mailings and Demographics

A total of 124 principals or vice-principals were contacted by telephone during the period March through June 2000, and 88 schools expressed willingness to complete the ISS questionnaires. The first round resulted in the mailing of 386 questionnaire;, however, a first round total of 161 usable returns (42%) were received. The follow-up mailing resulted in an additional 15 completed, usable returns, thereby increasing the number of usable returns to 176 (46%). The questionnaires were completed predominantly by teachers, 58 (33%); principals, 46 (26%); assistant/vice-principals, 39 (22%); and guidance counselors; 13 (7%). The remaining 20 participants (11%) included curriculum leaders, behavior management specialists, teacher's assistants, secretaries, an

ISS aid, Special Education Coordinator, and a student.

Development and Implementation of ISS

Corbett (1981) indicated that, although involving stakeholders in decisions about the nature of ISS is a tedious task, nonetheless it yields rewards. This section focused on the development and implementation of ISS programs. The findings to the items on the questionnaires and interview schedules, as they relate to the research questions 1 to 4 (see p. 5), are reported. Specifically, emphasis was placed on: a) rationale for developing and implementing ISS, b) participants in the development and implementation of ISS, c) sources of funding for the program, d) the extent to which public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12; in three major cities in Alberta; utilize ISS as part of their discipline programs, and e) the length of time ISS has been in operation in the schools.

Rationale for Developing and Implementing ISS Programs

Item 9 on the questionnaires required respondents to list two reasons why their school decided to develop and implement an ISS program. Thirty respondents (17%) did not provide reasons, while 146 (83%) did. The reasons suggested by respondents were categorized by the researcher according to the "natural breaks" (gaps) in the percentage of responses to the items. The categories ranged from most frequent to least frequent responses for each reason. Some school documents were also analyzed and the findings fell in these categories. Additionally, during the analysis of the interview data, responses that did not "fit" the categories that emerged from the questionnaire data were encountered, and these responses were presented separately. In this section the findings are discussed under the identified frequency categories and the emergent themes, from the interviews, that did not "fit" these categories.

Most frequent responses (13.0% - 18.5%). The six most frequently suggested reasons for developing and implementing an ISS program were mentioned by a total of 133 respondents. As shown in Table 4.1, "To provide an alternative to OSS" was suggested by 27 participants. Ed, a teacher, stated that one of the reasons for establishing ISS was, actually, to protect some of the students, in a way, from the heavy handed

Table 4.1
Reasons for Developing and Implementing ISS Programs

Reasons	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
Most frequent responses (13.0% - 18.5%)		
To provide an alternative to OSS	27	18.5%
To provide a quiet environment in which students can work on their assignments	24	16.4%
To keep students in school in a supervised environment	22	15.1%
To provide another step in the school's discipline cycle	21	14.4%
To serve as a consequence for inappropriate behavior	20	13.7%
To enhance the teaching and learning atmosphere in the regular classroom by removing the misbehaving student(s)	19	13.0%
Frequent responses (9.6% - 10.3%)		
To respond to students not being supervised because parents/guardians are not at home during the time students are suspended out-of-school.	15	10.3%
To respond to students' academic and behavioral needs	14	9.6%
Moderately frequent responses (3.4% to 6.2%		
To deter students from misbehaving	9	6.2%
To provide time-out for teachers and students	8	5.5%
To provide consistency among staff, students, administrators, and the community regarding behavioral expectation	7	4.8%
To counteract students' perception that OSS is a vacation or reward	6	4.1%
To address the need to track students' misbehavior, the number of students suspended from class, and by whom	6	4.1%
To provide teachers an alternative for dealing with disruptive behavior rather than sending students to the office or to the hallway where they are unsupervised	6	4.1%
To provide students the opportunity to reflect on their behavior and help them make better choices through counseling by staff members	6	4.1%
To provide a strategy which holds students accountable for their actions	5	3.4%
Least frequent responses (0.7% - 2.1%)		
To reduce the number of OSSs	3	2.1%
To punish students	3	2.1%
To assist students who lack parental support at home	3	2.1%
To provide a safe and caring school environment for all students and staff	3	2.1%
To help teachers administer disciplinary action	3	2.1%
To eliminate the problem of suspended students roaming the community and causing trouble	2	1.4%
To provide an opportunity for the school and parents to work together to help the student	1	0.7%
To provide a "contact" for at-risk students	1	0.7%

approach to discipline that was adopted by the administrators. He felt that OSS was administered frequently, and in some cases for very minor infractions. In support of this claim, Ed referred to the case in which two students were suspended from school for walking across the field during school hours instead of getting on the bus and going to church as required. He also cited the case of two seventeen year olds who were made to kneel in front of a bulletin board with their noses to the wall while the rest of the students filed by to leave the building during lunch break. David, a principal, also supporting the notion that ISS served as an alternative to OSS, noted that students disliked ISS, so in terms of having some value, ISS was viewed as a more severe consequence, in many instances, than OSS. Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, indicated that students in his Special Education class often had a difficult home life so the more time they spent in school – even in ISS – the better.

The second and third most frequently suggested reasons were: "to provide a quiet environment in which students can work on their assignment(s)," and "to keep students in school in a supervised environment." Parents, according to Iris, a vice-principal, understand and like the fact that students are allowed to stay in school and continue their work even though they were isolated from their peers. David, a vice-principal, indicated that ISS kept students in the building where teachers continued working with them. One school document claimed that students who misbehaved were sent out in the hall or to the office and thus a lot of learning time was lost. The recent DEN (Discuss, Educate, and Nurture) program was created with the hope of reducing lost learning time for those students.

The other reasons in this category were: "to provide another step in the school's discipline cycle," "to serve as a consequence for inappropriate behavior," and "to enhance the teaching and learning atmosphere in the regular classroom by removing the misbehaving student(s)." The reasons included in one of the documents provided by the schools were consistent with the last two in this category. David, a principal, further indicated that when students behaved appropriately there were positive consequences. On the other hand when students interfered with the teaching, learning, or well being of the other students, then the most relevant consequence was the loss of the privilege of being in the class for a period of time. These students were assigned to the ISS room.

Frequent responses (9.6% - 10.3%). Fifteen participants indicated that ISS was planned and implemented "to respond to students not being supervised because parents/guardians are not at home during the time students are suspended out-of-school" (see Table 4.1). Jason, a principal, echoed the sentiment when he said that very often ISS resulted because parents were not at home and there was no way to get the student home. "To respond to students' academic and behavioral needs" was the other rationale in this category.

Moderately frequent responses (3.4% - 6.2%). Eight of the reasons, which were suggested by a total of 53 respondents, on the ISS questionnaires, fell in this category (see Table 4.1). The first four were: "to deter students from misbehaving," "to provide time-out for teachers and students," "to provide consistency among staff, students, administrators, and the community regarding expectations," and "to counteract students' perception that OSS is a vacation or reward." Regarding a vacation, Jason, a principal, noted that members of staff realize that sending students home, nine out of ten times, is akin to giving them a holiday. In his words, "By keeping them in school, removed from the social element which probably got them in trouble in the first place, we have a little bit more control. We have knowledge of what they are doing."

Least frequent responses (0.7% - 2.1%). Eight responses were suggested by a small number of respondents. The first three were as follows: "to reduce the number of OSS," "to punish students," and "to assist students who lack parental support at home" (see Table 4.1).

Regarding a safe school environment, Luke, a Guidance Counselor, and two teachers, Ed and Elsie, noted that when a student behaved inappropriately, and if it seemed to be more of an uncooperative issue, but remained a safe situation for the teacher and other students, an ISS was arranged. When the student needed to "get away," he/she was referred to ISS to reduce the likelihood of the situation escalating to a physical confrontation. Safety was also a concern in a school that offered 18 shop programs. In this case safety was not limited to physical confrontation, but was centered around concerns for students being injured by machines and other tools. Elsie said that, a lot of times, shop teachers did not have the wherewithal to deal with students who behaved inappropriately in the shop area, and simultaneously monitor the rest of the class while

machines were running and tools were being used. Shop teachers' concern with adequate supervision and prevention of injury to students, quite often, resulted in students being referred to ISS. Elsie also pointed out that teachers of academics made fewer referrals to ISS than shop teachers or Physical Education teachers.

Nature of students and programs offered. During the analysis of the interview data new themes emerged that did not "fit" the categories that resulted from the analysis of the questionnaire data regarding the rationale for the development and implementation of an ISS program. These other reasons for ISS were based, in part, on the nature of the students and the programs offered by the schools.

Jason and David, principals, Elsie, a teacher, and Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, said that their respective schools had students who were mentally challenged, and students who were diagnosed with behavior disorders of some sort by a psychologist or psychiatrist. Elsie noted that her school was like a dumping ground for students who had problems in other schools. A number of students who had failed in the regular school system were sent to her school.

These four interviewees also reported that their school offered either an Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) or some sort of special educational program. Students enrolled in an IOP did not receive the regular academics like a 10, 20, or 30 curriculum sequence. Instead they did a lot of hands-on work, like auto-services, and on graduating they received an IOP diploma.

Participants in the Development and Implementation of ISS

This section provides a summary of the data on participants who were involved in the development and implementation of ISS along with the extent of its utilization and life span.

Development. Respondents were asked to select, from a list, the personnel who were involved in developing the ISS program in their school. Table 4.2 lists the persons who were involved. The vast majority of respondents (136 and 135) reported that assistant principals and principals respectively, were involved in the development of the ISS program in their school. Teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students were also noted by a large number of respondents. Ed, a teacher, stated that the establishment

Table 4.2
Personnel Who Assisted in the Development of ISS Programs (n=176)

Selected Personnel	No. Respondents	% Respondents
Assistant/Vice-principal	136	77
Principal	135	77
Teachers	109	62
Guidance Counselor	78	44
Parents	43	24
Students	28	16
Other	39	22

Note: Respondents could check more than one response; total percentages do not equal 100%.

of ISS in his school was teacher driven, not administrator driven. The 39 respondents who checked the "other" category listed teacher's assistants, division office Special Education Coordinator, discipline committee members, school advisory council members, behavior management specialists, and secretaries in response to the questionnaire direction, "Please specify."

Implementation. Most respondents, 160 (90.9%), noted that the assistant/vice-principal was involved in the implementation of ISS. Specifically, the "other" category consisted of a variety of responses, which somewhat similar to the "development" item, included the following: teacher's assistants, division office Special Education Coordinator, secretaries, behavior management assistants, and discipline committee members. Table 4.3 presents the data regarding participants who were involved in the implementation of ISS programs.

Table 4.3
Persons Involved in the Implementation of ISS (n=176)

Selected Personnel	No. Respondents	% Respondents
Assistant/Vice-principal	160	90.9
Principal	154	87.5
Teachers	117	66.5
Guidance Counselor	73	41.5
Parents	32	18.2
Students	27	15.3
Other	27	15.3

Note: Respondents could check more than one response; total percentages do not equal 100%.

Extent of the Utilization of ISS

In this section a summary of the data on schools with and without ISS programs is presented. Specifically, the findings as they relate to the research question – To what extent do public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 to 12, in three major cities in Alberta, utilize ISS programs as part of their discipline program? – are reported for the respondents as a group (n=176).

During telephone conversations with principals or vice-principals, if they indicated that their schools did not have an ISS program they were then asked to select two reasons, from a list of six, which were read to them, concerning why their schools did not have an ISS program, and no further information was sought from them. Thirty-two of the 124 schools contacted by telephone did not have an ISS program. As shown in Table 4.4, the four predominant reasons for not having an ISS program were: "Our school does not believe that ISS is effective," "Our school does not have the money to fund an ISS program," "Our school lacks the facilities," and "Our school lacks staff to

Table 4.4
Reported Reasons for Not Having an ISS Program

Reported Reasons	Participants (n=32) suggesting reason	
Our school:	f	%f
♦ Does not believe that ISS is effective	10	31.3
♦ Does not have the money to fund an ISS program	9	28.1
♦ Lacks the facilities	9	28.1
♦ Lacks staff to supervise ISS. It's a management nightmare having to use teachers to run ISS	9	28.1
We do not have lots of discipline problems to warrant resources to support such a program	4	12.5
OSS is more effective than ISS because with OSS parents become involved in the process. ISS is no inconvenience for parents.	3	9.4
ISS is not on our list of options	3	9.4
We have Saturday detention 8:00am to 12 noon	2	6.3
We had an ISS program but it was discontinued	2	6.3
Other *	2	6.3

* a) At this level (Grade 10-12) there is no need to have students under constant supervision.
b) We are looking at it for next year.

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; respondents could submit more than one response.

supervise ISS." Other reasons, each mentioned by between two and four of the 32 respondents, are shown in the table.

Table 4.5 is a description of schools with ISS programs according to school size and district. The categories designed for the purpose of reporting school size were: 300 students and under, 301 – 600, 601 – 900, 901 – 1200, 1201 – 1500, and 1501 and over. Schools with a student population of 301 to 600 students had the highest percentage, 52%, of ISS programs. Included in this category were 23 public and nine separate schools. Second were schools with 601 - 900 students, while schools with a student populations of 901 – 1200, and 1201 – 1500 had the lowest percentage, 3%, of ISS programs. The four schools in the last three categories were in the public school system.

Table 4.5
Schools With ISS Programs According to Size and District

Student Enrolment	Schools (n=62) f	% f	# of Schools With ISS in District	
300 and under	8	13	Public	6
			Separate	2
301 – 600	32	52	Public	23
			Separate	9
601 – 900	14	23	Public	10
			Separate	4
901 – 1200	2	3	Public	2
1201 – 1500	2	3	Public	2
1501 and over	4	6	Public	4
Total	62	100%		62

Length of Time ISS Has Been in Operation

The number of years ISS has been in operation ranged from less than a year to 30 years. The ages of the ISS programs are detailed in Table 4.6. The five most frequently suggested ages – ten, two, five, three, and four years – were mentioned by a total of 71 respondents. Eleven percent of the respondents stated that their ISS program was over 10 years old, 54% indicated that theirs were ten years old or less, 32% did not respond to the item on the questionnaire, or said that they did not know how long ISS had been in operation in their school, and 3% provided responses such as "long term," "a few," and "many years," which could not be categorized numerically.

Table 4.6
Age of ISS Programs and the Number of Respondents Suggesting a Particular Age (n = 114)

Years in Operation	f	% f
One year or less	4	3.5
Two years	17	14.9
Three years	12	10.5
Four years	10	8.8
Five years	14	12.3
Six years	5	4.4
Seven years	8	7.0
Eight years	6	5.3
Nine years	1	0.9
Ten years	18	15.8
Eleven years	1	0.9
Twelve years	1	0.9
Fourteen years	1	0.9
Fifteen years	4	3.5
Seventeen years	3	2.6
Twenty years	6	5.3
Twenty-five years	1	0.9
Thirty years	2	1.8
Total	114	100.0%

Regarding not being knowledgeable about the age of ISS, six of the 28 (16%) respondents provided further comments. Four respondents said that ISS was in effect when they arrived at the school, and the other two participants noted that they did not refer to ISS as a formal program, instead it was simply another procedure or alternative to OSS.

Philosophy

When asked about the philosophy behind the ISS program, 33 (19%) respondents did not answer the question, or stated that they did not know the philosophy, or there was no philosophy behind their ISS program. However, the suggested philosophical orientations were centered on a) *custodial/strict authority* or b) *freedom with control/healthy discipline*.

Custodial/Strict Authority

Short et al. (1994) indicated that "custodial educators identify a wide variety of behaviors as being problematic, [and] they favor handling problem behaviors with control techniques such as punishment" (p. 7). In this study 100 participants (70%) suggested the following: "imposing isolation by removing the student from the regular classroom," 18.2%; "having the student complete school assignments, but not take part in the normal routine of the day," 16.1%; "having a deterrent that addresses inappropriate behavior," 14%; "mainly keeping students in school," 14%; "removing the student from the classroom in order to diffuse the problem,"2.8%; "responding to parents wish to have students stay in school," 2.1% "having staff; students; and parents think that the disciplinary policy is being applied fairly and consistently," 2.1%; and "forgiving the student for his/her transgression before he/she asks for it" 0.7%.

Freedom with Control/Healthy Discipline

Osborn and Osborn (1989) stated that "freedom with control implies [students] learning through understanding rather than learning through fear. For teachers it means making decisions on the important limits and holding to these; while permitting [students] freedom in areas where freedom can be freely given" (p. 37). Nakamura (2000), lending support, pointed out that "healthy discipline is discipline that requires a balance between firmness and respect. It is a process that decides on rules for the mutual benefit of teachers and students" (p. 218). The writer adds, "Through healthy discipline, the teacher does not direct, but guides [misbehaving students] through a problem-solving process. The teacher provides clearly defined limits, acceptable choices, and clearly stated consequences that hold the students accountable for their behavior" (p. 218). Forty-three respondents' (31%) comments fell in this category, and the comments were as follows: "holding students accountable for their action and having them experience consequences for inappropriate behavior;" 18%, and "providing counseling, academic help, working one-on-one with students, and helping students develop problem-solving skills," 13%.

Goals

Participants were asked to select the goals of their ISS program from a list of 19 goals on the questionnaire, and to specify other goals that were not listed. (The goals on the questionnaire were gleaned from the ISS literature.) The goals of providing an alternative to out-of-school suspension, of removing the problem student from the classroom for a specified time, and of influencing students though counseling, to choose to behave appropriately were selected by large numbers of respondents. The least selected goals from the list and those suggested by participants in the "other" category included: "to fashion activities in home and school survival training for students," " to diagnose students' learning difficulties," "to keep students off the streets and in school on school days," "to provide students time to reflect on the inappropriate behavior and to formulate strategies for future behavior," and "to support parents who are unable to supervise an at-home suspension." Table 4.7 indicates the responses to the goals listed on the questionnaire.

Models

Nineteen respondents (11%) said that their ISS was patterned after a theoretical model, 65 (37%) noted that their school's ISS was not patterned after a theoretical model, 86 (49%) stated that they did not know if their school's ISS was patterned after a theoretical model, and six (3%) participants did not respond to the item. The findings regarding this item would be further discussed according to these initial responses – patterned after a theoretical model and not patterned after a theoretical model.

Patterned After a Theoretical Model

Of the 19 respondents (11%) who indicated that their ISS was patterned after a theoretical model, six (3.4%) suggested that their ISS program was based on ***Time Out*** theory, while four (2.3%) said that theirs was based on ***Consequences***. According to one respondent, "The most relevant consequence for inappropriate behavior is the progressive loss of privilege of participating with the group." Five respondents did not provide an explanation regarding the theoretical model after which their ISS was patterned while four others made the following comments:

Table 4.7

Percentage of Participants Who Identified the Goals of the ISS Programs (n = 176)

Goals	f	% f
To provide an alternative to out-of-school suspension	153	86.9
To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time	144	81.8
To influence students, through counseling to choose to behave appropriately	136	77.3
To help students develop self-discipline	129	73.3
To reduce the number of discipline problems	120	68.2
To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior	120	68.2
To help students develop problem-solving skills	120	68.2
To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent	114	64.8
To reduce truancy	102	58.0
To monitor students' behavior during ISS	86	48.9
To help students improve their study habits	84	47.7
To reduce chronic tardiness	71	40.3
To help students improve their self-image	62	35.2
To reduce students' feeling of alienation from school	57	32.4
To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS	57	32.4
To assess students' progress in academic skills	57	32.4
To diagnose students' learning difficulties	51	29.0
To focus on instruction in the basic skills	42	23.9
To fashion activities in home and school survival training for students	24	13.6
Other	5	2.8

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants could check more than one response.

The former principal brought the idea back from an Association for Supervision, Curriculum and Development (ASCD) conference, and after visiting schools with ISS.

Johnny Bright, a principal in the city, used this strategy. I read about it in a professional journal.

We use a tracker program called ***The Student Discipline Tracker*** to track our Discipline Cycle, which is based on a forgiveness model.

We are developing a process based on Barbara Coloroso's **Discipline With Dignity** and the principal's Masters' Thesis.

Not Patterned After a Theoretical Model

Sixty-five respondents (37%) noted that their schools' ISS was not patterned after a theoretical model, and 37 (21%) offered no further explanation. The 28 (16%) who did offer an explanation said that their ISS was an ad hoc program based on a variety of readings, other ISS programs in the district, and staff experiences, or that ISS was used to accommodate working parents. As one respondent stated, "A student would not be sent home if there was no one at home to supervise him or her. When 'home-care' was an issue ISS was assigned."

Essential Elements

In this section the findings are presented according to the following key components of ISS programs - funding, facilities, staff training, referral, follow-up, evaluation, and daily operational procedures. The "Daily operational procedure" category was also sub-divided into staffing, communication, ISS rules, assignments, record keeping, and counseling.

Source of Funding

Participants provided a variety of responses to the question regarding funding for their ISS program. Of the 176 participants, twenty-five percent provided no response or claimed that the item was not applicable. Twenty percent noted that their ISS program was funded from an allocation in the school's budget, and two respondents claimed that their school received a grant specifically designated for the ISS program. Fifty-five percent said that no funds were specifically allocated for ISS, and 14 members (7.9%) of this group made the following comments: a) each staff member made the decision, in a collaborative way, to give up one preparation period per seven-day cycle to supervise ISS, 4.5%; b) the supervision of ISS was part of the duties of the administrative team, 2.8%; and c) ISS depended primarily on sending the student to another teacher's classroom, 0.6%.

Facilities

There were 175 usable responses (99.4%) to the item regarding the location of the

ISS facilities. Forty-eight percent of the respondents reported that their ISS facilities were located in the principal or assistant/vice-principal's office, while about 33% percent indicated that the facilities were isolated from other classrooms but located in the same building. In Ralph's (the principal) school students were assigned an ISS in one of two locations – 1) an area away from the classroom, or 2) the time-out room which is a small room about four feet by four feet – in the *Turning Points* section of the school. This room could be locked if the referred student posed a danger to staff members or others. Generally, mainstream students were not locked in this room. Additionally, 13% of the participants claimed that their ISS facilities were located in the midst of other classrooms, while five percent checked off the "other" category and suggested the following: a) a variety of locations, depending on the availability of a room at the time, 2.8%; b) in the library, 1.7%; and c) in the staff workroom, 0.5%.

When asked, "What would make your ISS facilities more suitable?" about 5% of the participants did not respond to the item or stated that they did not know. This resulted in a total of 168 usable responses (95%) to the item. Forty percent of the participants reported that their schools needed carrels for the ISS room, 37% indicated that their facilities were adequate, 29% stated that their school needed a larger ISS room, and 14% claimed that the ISS room in their school needed books and computers. Additionally, 27% of the respondents checked off the "other" category and suggested the following requirements: a) a specific ISS room which is isolated from regular "traffic," 14.9%; b) a specific ISS teacher, 6.5%; c) a room with more natural light and ventilation, 2.9%; d) a one-way mirror and camera to monitor the ISS room, 1.2%; e) an ISS room closer to the office, 1.2%; and f) to correspond with the teacher assigned to supervise the ISS room, 0.6%. Table 4.8 presents the requirements that were indicated by the respondents.

Staff Training

Sixty-one percent of the respondents stated that no training was provided for ISS staff, 15% reported that on-going in-service education on ISS was provided, five percent reported that their school conducted a formal introductory workshop on ISS, 10% did not provide a response or stated that the item regarding training for ISS staff was not applicable, and nine percent checked off the "other" category and made the following

comments:

- Our school has an orientation regarding the school's discipline policy for new staff, 3.9%.
- ISS is discussed on a regular basis at staff meeting, 3.4%.
- In-school support and teacher's assistant workshops are available, 1.1%.
- I researched the topic, 0.6%.

Table 4.8
Making ISS Facilities More Suitable (n = 168)

Requirements	f	% f
Need carrels for students	67	39.9
They are adequate	62	36.9
Need a larger room	48	28.6
Need more books and computers	19	11.3
Need audio-visual equipment	10	6.0
Need emergency buzzer	8	4.8
Need telephone	6	3.6
Other	46	27.4

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants could check more than one response.

Referral

In this section the findings are addressed in accordance with the research questions that are germane to the portion of the model, referral to ISS. Specifically, research question 10 deals with strategies employed before the referral of students to ISS, students behaviors that result in referral to ISS, person who assigns the student to the ISS program; and for how long, and the information on the referred student that is forwarded to the ISS teacher. The findings regarding this research question are presented under the following sub-sections: a) guidelines for assigning students to ISS and communication of the guidelines, b) strategies employed prior to referral, c) behaviors that result in referral to ISS, d) misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS, e) the person(s) who assign(s) students to ISS; and duration of the referral, f) determination of the length of referral, g) the number of students assigned to ISS per day, h) the number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS, i) the information on the referred student that is given to the ISS teacher, and j) the percentage of the student population

that was assigned to ISS during the past academic year.

Guidelines and communication of the guidelines. When interviewees were questioned about the guidelines for assigning students to ISS their responses were mixed. Four interviewees stated that their school's guidelines were clearly stated while Ralph, a principal, Elsie, a teacher, and Bob, a behavior management specialist, hesitated to say *clearly stated* because they felt that each student and each situation had to be considered and weighed on its own merit, and sometimes that resulted in guidelines being waived. Three interviewees indicated that their school's referral guidelines were not clearly established.

In both Jason's (a principal) and Luke's (a guidance counselor) schools ISS was not formally established; it was not a program in itself. These two schools did not have clearly defined guidelines for assigning students to ISS; instead referral was done on an ad hoc basis. ISS was held in or outside the office. Jason went on to state that very often junior high students were referred to ISS because administrators were unable to contact parents or guardians by telephone on the said day the students misbehaved.

Ed, a teacher, noted that at his school guidelines for referring students to ISS were lacking. Administrators also taught various classes, however, when they were available to supervise ISS, it was held in an area by the office, but when they were not, the referring teacher sent the student to another teacher's classroom to serve the ISS time. Ed further pointed out that the level of tolerance for students' misbehavior varied among teachers, and consequently student referral to ISS depended, to some extent, on the teacher's threshold for misbehavior and the nature of the misbehavior.

With reference to communication of ISS referral procedures, Iris, a vice-principal, claimed that these procedures, along with those pertaining to the *Opportunities Room* (the term used when students refer themselves to ISS), were not well communicated to parents and students. She pointed out that the school's ISS program was less than a year old, nevertheless the increase in its usage led to telephone contacts with parents, during which the student's misdemeanor and ISS referral procedure were explained. On the other hand, staff members were informed about ISS and how it would fit into the school's discipline program approximately three months prior to its implementation. ISS was discussed at Faculty Council and general staff meetings. At two staff meetings, specific

reference was made to situations when the *Opportunity Room* or ISS might be a suitable procedure to adopt.

In Ralph's (principal), Joe's (guidance counselor), Elsie's (teacher), and Bob's (behavior management specialist) school the procedures for assigning students to ISS were well communicated to students, parents and staff members. The *Reflection Room* and *Time Out Room* were the terms used in lieu of ISS in Joe's and Elsie's school, respectively.

The *Reflection Room* document provided by Joe, a guidance counselor, was consistent with what he stated during the interview. Information on the *Reflection Room* was included in the students' agenda, and teachers discussed it with the students: a) at the beginning of the academic year during orientation, and b) in the various classrooms. Joe explained that students were also told what behaviors would land them in the *Reflection Room* and what they had to do to avoid being assigned to the room. With reference to providing parents with the pertinent information, Joe reported that parents also had access to their child's agenda.

Elsie, a teacher, noted that from year to year, and depending on the profile of the students enrolled in the school, there may be a lower or greater need to have an ISS program. She explained that when changes had to be made to the ISS program, a committee was struck, and sometimes the reason committees were struck was because teachers were misusing ISS. Elsie gave two examples of misuse – assigning students to ISS for coming late, and because they did not have a hair net for Home Economics class. She reported that ISS was not meant to be used for such minor offences; instead it was for serious misdemeanors such as violence, aggressive behavior and dangerous confrontations. The recommendations suggested by the committee were discussed at general staff meetings, and a handout referring to the changes was placed in each teacher's portfolio. Elsie also added that handouts on ISS were among the literature that students were asked to take home, but whether parents read them or not was uncertain.

Ralph, the principal, and Bob, the behavior management specialist, employees in the same school, said that their school has a written discipline policy which is reviewed at staff meeting, annually, early each academic year. According to Ralph, staff members may have to be reminded about twice a year of the procedures for assigning students to

the *Turning Point* area for an ISS rather that always sending the misbehaving student directly to the principal's office. Ralph also indicated that parents were given a brief overview, twice a year, of the ISS program, and a copy of the entire discipline policy was made available to them on request. Students had all the important dates and an outline of the discipline policy in their handbooks. The ISS program and procedures were reviewed with the students at the beginning of the academic year at general assembly, and thereafter about once a month one or two schools rules were reviewed and emphasized.

Six interviewees stated that their school's discipline policy was published in the students' handbook, and there was a section specifically devoted to student conduct. It outlined the consequences – a slap on the wrist, detention; lunchtime and after school, ISS, OSS, and expulsion – for inappropriate behavior. David, the principal, noted that at his school rules, consequences, and reinforcements were posted in every classroom and they were reviewed when the need arose. Interviewees also pointed out that parents were informed about the school rules and regulations through newsletters, the students' handbook, and at parent meetings. With reference to staff members, it was reported that their school's discipline policy was discussed at a staff meeting at the beginning of the academic year, and, in addition, it was written in the staff's handbook.

In this section, the general guidelines used for assigning students to ISS were discussed. The focus in the following section centers on the strategies employed prior to students referral to ISS.

Strategies employed prior to referral. According to 172 respondents to the item regarding intervention strategies typically used with students prior to their placement in ISS, the most commonly used interventions were: teacher-student conference, telephone call to parent(s) or guardian(s), and referral to the principal or assistant/vice-principal's office. Additionally, a few respondents checked off the "other" category and reported strategies such as time-out (in- or out-of-class), preparing a written case statement by a member of staff or by the student, and referral of the student to a behavior specialist. The number and percentages of respondents who reported use in their school of various intervention strategies with students prior to referral to ISS are detailed in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9
Strategies Used Prior to the Placement of Students in ISS (n = 172)

Strategies	f	%f
Teacher-student conference	155	90.1
Telephone call to parent(s) or guardian	146	84.9
Referral to principal or assistant/vice-principal's office	140	81.4
Lunch-time and/or after school detention	123	71.5
Teacher-parent(s) or guardian(s) conference	108	62.8
Teacher-parent(s) or guardian(s)/student conference	97	56.4
Guidance counselor/student conference	81	47.1
Behavior contract	76	44.2
Reward system	41	23.8
Denial of extracurricular activities	39	22.7
Lowering of students' grade	12	7.0
Peer counseling	11	6.4
Other	7	4.1

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants could check more than one response.

Misbehaviors that resulted in referral to ISS. The majority of respondents reported that disruption in class, insubordination, verbal abuse, fighting, skipping class, and failure to do homework resulted in students' placement in ISS. Table 4.10 presents the data on the behaviors that resulted in students being assigned to ISS. A few participants listed in the "other" category, the following behaviors which also resulted in referral to ISS: skipping detention, 4.0%; failure to work during class, 2.9%; not being prepared for class, 1.7%; repeatedly missing home-room check, 1.7%; harassing others, 1.7%; bullying, 1.7%; student intensified conflict with the teacher, 1.1%; swearing, 0.6%; falling grades, 0.6%; and aggressive behavior or inappropriate play during break, 0.6%. In addition, David, a principal, reported that students were assigned an ISS not only for misbehaving, but also for being very far behind in their schoolwork.

Respondents were also asked to place an asterisk next to the three most frequent behaviors, on the list of 15, that resulted in students' placement in ISS. However, 17 subjects (10%) did not complete the task. Eighty (50%), 44 (28%), and 36 (23%) respondents reported that disruption in class, insubordination, and verbal abuse, respectively, were the three most frequent behaviors that resulted in students' placement

in ISS.

Table 4.10
Misbehaviors That Resulted in Students Being Assigned to ISS (n = 174)

Behaviors	f	%f
Disruption in class	165	94.8
Insubordination	145	83.3
Verbal abuse	145	83.3
Fighting	127	73.0
Skipping class	112	64.4
Failure to do homework	107	61.5
Truancy	91	52.3
Smoking in a non-smoking area on school grounds	83	47.7
Damaging property	81	46.6
Stealing	74	42.5
Late for school or class	72	41.4
Cheating	54	31.0
Possession of illegal substances	38	21.8
Possession or use of a weapon	21	12.1
Other	27	15.5

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants could check more than one response.

Misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS. When asked if certain behaviors were deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS, 164 respondents said "yes", 10 said "no," and two did not respond. Table 4.11 shows that possession or use of illegal substances and possession or use of a weapon were the top two misbehaviors that were deemed too severe by a majority of respondents, to be dealt with through ISS.

Persons who assigned students to ISS, and duration of the referral. Respondents were asked to: a) select from a list of six responses, on the questionnaire, the person(s) responsible for assigning students to ISS, and b) use the other list and check-off the length of referral. There were 175 responses to the item regarding the referral of students to ISS. Eighty-one percent of the respondents reported that the principal and assistant/vice-principals assigned students to ISS. David and Ralph, principals, and Bob, a behavior management specialist, reported that staff members were

Table 4.11
Misbehaviors Deemed too Severe to be Dealt with Through ISS (n = 164)

Misbehaviors	f	%f
Possession or use of illegal substances	106	64.6
Possession or use of a weapon	98	59.8
Fighting	54	32.9
Physical assault or behavior that jeopardizes the personal safety of others.	40	24.4
Vandalism	32	19.5
Sexual, verbal, or racial harassment of other students or staff	27	16.5
Stealing	21	12.8
Smoking violation	20	12.2
Alcohol violation	20	12.2
Insubordination	12	7.3
"Columbine/Taber" type of threats	10	6.1
Repeated misbehavior	7	4.3
Cheating	5	3.0
Continuation of misbehavior after ISS	4	2.4
Misbehavior in ISS room	3	1.8
Uncontrolled anger	2	1.2
Repeated failure to do homework	2	1.2
Arson	2	1.2
Skipping class	1	0.6
Disruption in class	1	0.6
Parental interference in the discipline process	1	0.6

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; respondents could check more than one response.

expected to adhere to a four-step intervention strategy, with step four being referral to ISS, when dealing with inappropriate behavior. Specifically, in steps one through three, teachers were expected to employ various classroom management techniques to influence students to choose to behave appropriately; however, when students continued to misbehave, step four, ISS, was implemented by the principal or assistant/vice-principal. Fifty percent of the participants indicated that the principal and assistant/vice-principal were solely responsible for assigning students to ISS. Four respondents noted on the questionnaire that teacher participation in the process was limited to making recommendations, and five interviewees echoed this view. Iris, a vice-principal, reported that even when a student was referred to ISS for only one class period, parents had to be notified by telephone or mail, and that was an administrator's responsibility.

Forty percent of the respondents indicated that teachers were permitted to assign students to ISS. Ralph, a principal, stated that his school has a behavior management program, called *Turning Point,* for students with severe behavior problems, and a team of behavior management specialists operated the program, in a particular section of the school. In step three, teachers working in conjunction with the *Turning Point* coordinator were permitted to assign mainstream students to ISS for a period of time not exceeding a half-a-day. Ralph indicated that he had to remind teachers, about twice a year, that they were permitted to assign students to ISS for up to half-a-day rather than send them to the principal's office. Additionally, in the odd case, if it involved a student enrolled in the *Turning Point* program, the coordinator would bypass the principal or vice-principal and assign the student to ISS. The coordinator did not attempt such with a mainstream student.

Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, pointed out that he had the authority to assign his Special Education students to ISS, and his behavior intervention strategy was based on a two-step approach. Step-one required that the misbehavior be discussed with the student, and when the situation warranted it, detention – lunchtime or after school – was assigned. If the misbehavior continued, the next step was ISS. Although Selwyn was not aware of the specifics regarding referral to ISS for the rest of the student body, he was quite sure that the authority to do so resided with administrators.

Joe, a guidance counselor, and Elsie, a teacher, reported that teachers in their school, respectively, were responsible for assigning students to ISS. Joe stated that teachers in his school were required to rank students' misbehaviors as small, medium, or large according to predetermined descriptors, and the school's document informed them that they were responsible for managing "small" misbehaviors such as inappropriate dress, not being on task, disturbing behavior, and not being prepared for class. They also had the authority to refer students who indulged in "medium" misbehaviors – inappropriate behaviors that disrupted classroom procedures, non-compliance, abusive or suggestive gestures, language or dress, rough play with no intent to hurt, verbal aggression, and damage to the property of others within the classroom – directly to ISS for anywhere from one period to a full school day. Generally, students were given at least two opportunities to desist misbehaving before being sent to ISS. School policy noted

that before assigning an ISS teachers should consider whether or not a student would benefit from the referral. Additionally, teachers were not permitted to send students to ISS during the last 30 minutes of the day. This restriction was imposed so as to facilitate record keeping and other daily duties of the ISS supervisor. Finally, students whose misbehaviors fell in the "large" category were automatically sent to the office where they were dealt with by the principal or vice-principal.

This school's ISS program was also divided into trimesters – September to Christmas, Christmas to spring break, and spring break to the end of the academic year. Students started each session with a clean behavior slate.

Fourteen and seven percent of the respondents reported that guidance counselors and parents, respectively, assigned students to ISS. Additionally, four percent of the respondents checked off the "other" category and suggested that behavior management specialists, 2%; students themselves, 1%; lunchroom supervisors, 0.5%; and teacher's assistants, 0.5%; assigned students to ISS.

Jason, a principal, Joe, a guidance counselor, Elsie, a teacher, and Iris, a vice-principal spoke of student self-referral to ISS, and self-referral was based on two criteria: 1) having a bad day and/or 2) the need to catch-up on assignments. Students who were having a bad day and felt that they needed some time away from the regular classroom requested referral to ISS before they got themselves in trouble. Permission was usually granted if the administrator or teacher thought that the student was not going to miss a very important class and if the ISS room was not full on that particular day. Iris emphasized that those students exhibited a kind of self-discipline while, according to Elsie, ISS was viewed as therapeutic by those students who recognized that they had a problem and wanted to control their emotions, "cool down," and continue working on their assignments. Elsie further reported that sometimes those students reported to the ISS room and sometimes they merely wondered the halls until they "cooled down." Iris also said that once in a while students who were behind in their assignments sought self-referral to the opportunity room. Teachers also sought permission from the teacher in charge of ISS to have a student spend a period or two in the room catching-up on assignments. Iris stressed that the use of the ISS room in her school for such purposes was not considered an official ISS.

Luke and Joe, guidance counselors, and Eric, a vice-principal, reported that parents had the right to contest their son's or daughter's referral to ISS. Joe claimed that parents did not always agree with school officials when their child was given an ISS because, sometimes, they paid more attention to their son's or daughter's description of the incident rather than the overall circumstances. Eric pointed out that when teachers kept the lines of communication with parents open and treated students fairly most parents did not take issue when their son/daughter was given an ISS.

When asked, "What is the average length of referral to ISS?" 174 subjects provided responses to the item. Table 4.12 indicates that 85 respondents (49%) indicated that the average length of student referral to ISS was one day, while "part of a day" was checked by 26%, and two consecutive days was checked by 13% of the respondents. Additionally, seven respondents (4%) suggested the following lengths of time in the "other" column: "one to two class periods," "it depends on the behavior and response plan," and "sometimes several weeks with gradual return to class."

Table 4.12
Average Length of Referral to ISS (n = 174)

Length of Referral	f	%f
Part of the day	46	26.4
One day	85	48.9
Two consecutive days	22	12.6
Three consecutive days	9	5.2
Four consecutive days	2	1.2
Five consecutive days	3	1.7
Other	7	4.0
Total	174	100%

Determination of the length of referral. There were a total of 173 responses to the item, "How was the length of referral to ISS determined?" The most frequently marked of the four alternatives provided was, "Administrators determine the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior in compliance with a predetermined schedule." The item, "The principal or vice-principal determines the number of days on an ad hoc basis" was selected by 30% of the respondents. Table 4.13 presents the data on

the length of referral to ISS.

Table 4.13
Determination of the Length of Assignment to ISS (n =173)

How the length is determined	f	%f
Administrators determine the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior in compliance with a predetermined schedule.	128	74.0
The principal or vice-principal determines the number of days on an ad hoc basis.	52	30.1
The student's case is reviewed periodically by ISS staff to determine when the student should return to regular classes	13	7.5
Other *	42	24.3

* Students are assigned to ISS by their teacher for a period, the remainder of the period, or a block (two periods) 8.1% (14). Additionally, two respondents noted that if students have a double period the classroom teacher would indicate if they were allowed to return to class for the second period. Two participants also stated that ISS students must meet with the referring teacher after school, on the same day the infraction occurred, and resolve the issue.

The principal or vice-principal considers input from teachers, the guidance counselor, the student, and sometimes parents or guardians when determining the length of referral to ISS, 7.5% (13).

The normal length of referral to ISS is one day, 7.5% (13). However, two respondents in this group also stated that it could be half-a-day.

The team leader determines the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior, 0.6% (1).

When the goals of their Individual Program Plan are attained they are allowed to return to class, 0.6% (1).

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one response.

The number of students assigned to ISS per day. The majority of respondents reported that one to four students, per day, were assigned to ISS, while 11% suggested five to eight students. One respondent noted 21-24 students per day were assigned to ISS, and another respondent reported 0-5 students per year. Two respondents also noted that ISS students were required to meet with the referring teacher after school, on the same day the infraction occurred and resolve the issue. The average number of students assigned to ISS per school on a given day is presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 The Average Number of Students Assigned to ISS on Any One Day (n = 170)		
Number of Students	**f**	**% f**
1 – 4 students per day	131	77.1
5 – 8 students per day	18	10.6
9 – 12 students per day	4	2.3
13 – 16 students per day	3	1.8
17 – 20 students per day	4	2.3
21 – 24 students per day	1	0.6
Other *	9	5.3
Total	170	100%
*		
1 – 8 students per day	2	1.2
1 – 4 students per month	4	2.3
1 – 2 students per week	1	0.6
0 – 5 students per year	1	0.6
1 – 4 students by-weekly	1	0.6

The number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS. When asked to indicate the maximum number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS, seven respondents indicated that they did not know, two did respond to the item, and one stated that the item was not applicable. A total of 166 responses (94%) were used in further analysis of the item. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents checked the response category indicating that there was no maximum, and one member of this group stated that students were referred to ISS until there was a change in behavior. The remaining 12% reported the following: a) twice a year, 4.3%, b) three times a year, 3.5%, c) it depends on the incident; after five referrals an administrator meets with parents and student, 2.4%, d) after seven referrals OSS is implemented, 1.2%, and e) after 10 referrals to ISS, OSS or other disciplinary methods are adopted, 0.6%.

In analyzing the interview data regarding students who misbehave repeatedly and the consequences imposed, three themes – *change of consequence, increase in the length of ISS* and *re-assignment* – emerged. *Change of consequence* refers to the implementation of a consequence other than ISS.

Change of consequence. David and Jason, principals, and Iris, a vice-principal, reported that school administrators usually did not repeatedly refer the same student to ISS, especially if it was for the same misbehavior. Instead, administrators resorted to other disciplinary strategies, such as having parents, through mutual agreement, withdraw

their son or daughter from school; assigning an OSS; or expelling the student. One of the school documents stated that the eighth referral to ISS resulted in a one-day OSS; the ninth, three days OSS; and the tenth five days OSS, and other measures deemed necessary. These interviewees also explained that there were cases of repeated referrals, and the reasons for them were centered on the nature of the inappropriate behavior and the information about the student's family life. Iris stressed that student self-referral to ISS was the only condition under which repeated referrals were tolerated.

Elsie, a teacher, indicated that after five referrals to ISS, whether it was by the same teacher or another, the student had to meet with an administrator. She elaborated that although administrators tried to create other consequences, the lack of funding for programs such as anger management and conflict resolution placed a limitation on the number of viable consequences. Both Jason, a principal, and Iris, a vice-principal, spoke of a maximum of three referrals to ISS. However, Jason explained that if a student stayed out of trouble for two or three consecutive months after the first or second referral, what transpired before would not be brought up the next time the student misbehaved. Instead, the student would be given a "break," and the misbehavior would be treated as a "new" case.

Increase in the length of referral. Four interviewees noted that the length of time to be spent in ISS was increased for students who continued to misbehave in school. According to Ralph, (a principal), the first offence generally resulted in a one day ISS; the second two days; and usually after the third, the parent(s)/guardian(s) were required to meet with an administrator before their son or daughter was allowed to return to class. Referral to ISS in Ralph's school did not exceed three days; students were given an OSS instead.

In Joe's (a guidance counselor) school after five referrals to ISS (usually each was a period or two long) a parent meeting was called. At the meeting the student, parent(s), teachers, and an administrator would develop an intervention strategy which would include a student behavior plan, and two student noon-hour work sessions with the guidance counselor. The student's sixth referral to ISS automatically resulted in a half-day ISS, and the seventh one full day.

Joe claimed that referrals beyond seven resulted in a change of consequence. It

was also pointed out that when a student got four referrals within a month and another a month to six weeks later, this fifth referral was not counted as number five. The student would be complimented for his or her good behavior for that period, given a "break" and told that the next (i.e., sixth) referral would be viewed as his/her fifth. Joe also talked about eight repeat offenders having about four referrals each with whom he worked prior to Christmas. He told them individually that their next misdemeanor would result not only in referral to ISS, but also in each of them having to spend an hour during lunch break or after school in his office doing their schoolwork. Of the eight students who had to spend the extra time with him, one was referred to ISS within a month, two within three months, and the remaining five chose to behave appropriately in class and had no further referrals to ISS. That strategy was not built into the policy but, because it worked well, Joe said that he would continue using it.

Re-assigning students. Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, focused on re-assigning students over and over to ISS. He claimed that between September and May he had assigned some students to ISS ten times.

Information on the referred student provided to the ISS teacher. Respondents were asked to select one or more from the four alternatives provided, that describe information about the referred student, that was forwarded to the ISS teacher. Five participants (2.8%) did not respond to the item and this resulted in 171 (97.2%) usable responses. The response, "teacher wrote up or presented a verbal report on the student's recent behavior," was chosen by 107 participants, (63%); while 56 (33%) selected the alternative, "the ISS teacher has access to the student's file." About 18% of the respondents indicated that: a) no information on the referred student was forwarded to the ISS teacher, 9.4%; b) the administrator and teacher discussed background information, the problem, previous intervention strategies, and the reasons for assigning the student to ISS, 6.4%; and c) ISS is normally held in another teacher's classroom; the teacher will likely know the reason for referral and the assignment the student has to work on, 1.8%. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than of the alternatives provided.)

Percentage of students assigned to ISS during the previous academic year. Thirty-four percent of the participants did not respond to the item regarding the

percentage of students assigned to ISS during the past academic year. Of the 116 participants providing a response to the item, about 64% indicated that one to five percent of the student population was assigned to ISS during the past academic year, while 23% of the participants stated between six and ten percent of the student population. About 12 and one percent of the respondents claimed that 11%-15% and 20%-35% of the students, respectively, were assigned to ISS during the previous academic year. A respondent from one school, which was the school district's site for students with severe emotional and behavioral problems, reported that in any given year almost all students were likely to end up in ISS at some time.

Follow-up Procedures

Respondents were asked to select, from a list, the follow-up procedures that were carried out with students who were in ISS, and to specify other follow-up procedures that were not listed. Of the 173 (98.3%) who responded to the item, 31% reported that their school had no follow-up procedures, 28% indicated that the guidance counselor occasionally talked to the student during the following week, and six percent reported that the guidance counselor routinely talked to the students during the following weeks. Additionally, 39% of the respondents selected the "other" category and stated that: a) the principal, vice-principal or teacher routinely talks to the former suspendee during the following weeks to find out how he/she is doing, 18.5%; b) the student is supposed to meet with the referring teacher on the same day, after school, to discuss and seek closure to the issue, 8.1%; c) an administrator talks to the student, makes sure that the necessary forms are signed and all assignments are completed before the student is allowed to return to his/her regular class, 4.6%; d) behavior management staff, or a family support worker tries to influence the students to modify their behavior, 3.5%; e) a telephone call is made to parents on the day of referral so that parents can discuss the issue with their child when he/she gets home, 2.3%; and f) the school administrator meets with the referring teacher at a later date "to see" how things are going, 2.3%.

One of the school documents provided stated that when the behavior improvement plan submitted by the ISS student was unacceptable, the referring teacher could contact the guidance counselor and ask for assistance in conflict resolution, or

request that he meet with the student, individually. If the behavior plan was accepted by the classroom teacher, at the next class the teacher would privately thank the student then try to "catch the student being good."

Elsie, a teacher, noted that when funding was available, her school implemented various programs, such as conflict resolution and anger management. Some students, after serving their ISS time, were referred to those programs. Elsie reported that those programs were not in place all the time. Sometimes they were held for six or ten weeks then terminated, or sometimes they were offered twice a year.

Evaluation

This section focuses on the findings relevant to the evaluation of the ISS program. Specifically, the research findings are presented under the following headings: frequency of evaluation, nature of the evaluation, effectiveness of ISS programs, perceived opinions of others, attitudes about ISS, strengths of ISS, weaknesses of ISS, and suggestions for improving ISS.

Frequency of evaluation. Of the 176 participants in the survey, 31% did not provide a response regarding the frequency of evaluation of the ISS program, or indicated that they did not know if their school's ISS was evaluated. Twenty percent indicated that their ISS program was not evaluated. Six members of this group elaborated that their ISS was not a formal program per se, but a strategy used to address situations that arose. Three others reported that: 1) the school's ISS was recently implemented, 2) the school's discipline policy was currently being developed, and 3) maybe an evaluation would be attempted at a later date.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents reported that their ISS program was evaluated annually, and this turned out to be the most frequently selected response. Joe, a guidance counselor, stated that his school's yearly evaluation included a plan for collecting and storing data in the computer, an evaluation of the ISS room, monitoring of misbehaviors that were committed most often by students, the development of programs to address those misbehaviors, and the establishment of a committee to analyze the data. With reference to programs to address frequently committed misbehaviors, Joe, a guidance counselor, pointed out that inappropriate language was dealt with in religion

classes, while social relation issues were addressed in programs on human relations. He also indicated that staff members did a good job with these programs.

The school document on ISS, provided by Joe, made no reference to evaluation. However, the document represented a deliberate attempt to depict ISS as a guideline for what the school was striving to achieve – consistency and uniformity of consequences in dealing with misbehaviors.

Thirteen percent of the participants mentioned other times when ISS was evaluated. The times were as follows: a) on an on-going basis, 6.3%; b) on a daily basis, 2.8%; c) on a weekly basis, 1.1%; d) once this year, 0.6%; e) on a monthly basis, 0.6%; f) twice per year, 0.6%; g) every couple years, 0.6%; and h) every five years, 0.6%.

A total of 119 respondents provided information regarding the age of the program and the frequency of evaluation. There were some differences in responses based on the age of the program. For example, for the oldest programs (20-30years) the percentage of "don't know/no response" was higher (40%), and the percentage of evaluated ISS programs lower (30%). The ages of the programs and whether they were evaluated are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15
Age and Evaluation of ISS (n=119)

Age of ISS	Not Evaluated		Evaluated		Don't Know/ No response		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<10 years	18	21.7	45	54.2	20	24.1	83	100
10 – 19 years	4	15.4	15	57.7	7	26.9	26	100
20 – 30 years	3	30.0	3	30.0	4	40	10	100

Nature of the evaluation. The findings on the nature of the evaluation of the ISS programs are presented under the themes that emerged during the analysis of the interview data. The emerging themes were: *undecided about the evaluation format,* and *informal evaluation.*

Undecided about the evaluation format. The ISS program in Iris' (a vice-principal) school was in its first year of operation. Although it was primarily for Grades 9 and 10 it had been used a bit with Grades 11 and 12 students. Data were collected on

the number of students, including repeaters, who were referred to ISS, and the number of males and females. Iris reported that the program would be evaluated at the end of the academic year, and explained the uncertainty they faced regarding the form the evaluation procedure would take. She stated:

> I think we'll ask the teachers and the school how they feel it has been working for them. We'll ask administrators, although some have already talked about it informally. In fact we want to keep it going next year. Right now, I also think that we will be giving the Grade 9 students a survey, and one of the questions will pertain to ISS. I think parents, students, teachers, and administrators will do some type of evaluation on it. I don't know if it will be a questionnaire survey, or more of an informal thing where we chat with people. I am not sure.

Informal evaluation. Nine interviewees reported that their school's ISS program was informally evaluated. However, when asked to describe the evaluation their responses were mixed.

Ed, a teacher, said that his school's ISS program was in its first year of operation, and no criteria for evaluating the program were established prior to or after its implementation. He also stated that at the time of the interview the school did not have any statistics on ISS, and the evaluation was based on teachers' comments. For example, he noted that teachers often talked about ISS informally among themselves, and they had shared with him their feelings that it seemed to be working.

Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, informally evaluates the ISS program that he conducts when students in his Special Education class behave inappropriately. He spoke of ISS not being effective with one of his students who did no work and left the ISS room. In his words, "The only way it would work is if we have somebody with him the whole time. We don't have a teacher that can sit in the room all day to teach one student." Selwyn, referring to that specific student said, "I tried ISS and it didn't work so I stopped using it [with] that particular student." He concluded that that was the extent of the evaluation of his ISS program.

David, a principal, indicated that every year each school in the district conducts a Parent-Student Satisfaction survey. However, the survey did not contain questions that focused specifically on ISS. He explained that his school's ISS is about twenty years old

and it had never been formally evaluated. He further stated that students and parents have the opportunity to comment on the running of the school, and if there were any major concerns about ISS they certainly would have been mentioned.

Jason and Ralph, principals, Bob, a behavior management specialist, and Luke, a guidance counselor, also reported that their respective school's ISS program was informally evaluated, and the evaluation was based on feedback from teachers. Jason claimed that his school did not have a formal ISS program, and evaluation of ISS was an on-going process. For example, a comment that a student was good for three or four consecutive days after returning to class from ISS was viewed as an evaluation of the program. Ralph and Bob, employees at the same school, stressed that during weekly staff meetings, student and other school concerns, including ISS, were discussed. It was also stated that ISS was evaluated in a way, at these meetings, through questions such as: "Are you okay with what we are doing? What can we do differently?" Bob noted that teachers rely on ISS and they would not want to see it removed. Although Luke spoke of an informal evaluation of ISS he clearly pointed out that his knowledge of the evaluation procedure was limited. He further indicated that the school's leadership team which was composed of two administrators and five teacher coordinators did its own evaluation. "I am sure they involved staff, but I don't know how. Whether they involved students or parents I don't know because I haven't been involved in the process."

Eric, a vice-principal, in his description of his school's evaluation of its ISS program, pointed out that is was evaluated by administrators, curriculum leaders, and teachers as to whether it was working or not. Questions similar to those asked in Bob's school were raised at staff meeting. However, according to Eric, evaluation of ISS was based more on the number of students who were referred to ISS, especially repeat referrals, during the last semester. Based on that information it was decided that ISS was not working, and as a result the school adopted another discipline strategy.

Elsie, a teacher, described the evaluation of ISS in her school in terms of the interest generated by either new or old staff members in ISS at staff meeting, and whether or not ISS became a priority with administration. She said that no attempt was made at having a long-term assessment of ISS; referral data on students were discarded at the end of the semester. Additionally, students' opinions of ISS were not sought, and the

employment of ISS depended mainly on how strongly staff felt about having it.

Effectiveness of ISS programs. Respondents were asked to indicate how effective they believed their ISS programs were in achieving the goals provided on the questionnaires. The four-point effectiveness scale on the questionnaire was as follows: 4 – very effective, 3 – moderately effective, 2 – mildly effective, and 1 – not effective. A majority (65% and 58%) of the 176 respondents reported that their ISS programs were very effective in: a) removing the problem student from the classroom for a specified time and b) serving as an alternative to OSS, respectively. These items were also most frequently selected as goals of the ISS programs (see Table 4.7). Table 4.16 provides the details regarding the effectiveness of the ISS programs in achieving the goals that were specified on the questionnaire. Additionally, a few respondents indicated that the ISS programs were mildly effective in: a) assessing students' progress in academic skills, b) diagnosing students' learning difficulties, c) focussing on instruction in the basic skills, and d) fashioning activities in home and school survival training for students. These items were also those least selected as goals of the ISS programs (see Table 4.7).

Respondents' ratings of the effectiveness of their ISS programs in accomplishing the goals of their ISS programs were analyzed in conjunction with school size – 300 students and under, 301 – 600, 601 – 900, and over 900 students. Schools with a student population of 300 or fewer attained means in the range of 2.50 to 3.50; moderately effective on the degree of effectiveness scale for 17 goal items, while schools with a student population of 301 – 600 students attained means in the range of 2.50 to 4.00; moderately effective or very effective for 15 goal items. Schools with 601 – 900 students and schools with over 900 students had 16 and 13 items, respectively, with means in the range of 2.50 to 4.00; moderately effective or very effective on the degree of effectiveness scale. Ten goals with means in the range of 2.50 to 4.00, moderately effective or very effective on the degree of effectiveness scale, were common to the four school-size categories. These goals were as follows: "to provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent;" "to influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately;" "to help students develop problem-solving skills;" "to provide an alternative to OSS;" "to reduced truancy;" "to remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time;" "to help students improve their self-image;" "to monitor

Table 4.16
Effectiveness in Achieving the Goals of the ISS Program (n=176)

	Very Effective 4		Moderately Effective 3		Mildly Effective 2		Not Effective 1		Total		
Items	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean
To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time	93	64.6	37	25.7	13	9.0	1	0.7	144	100.0	3.54
To provide an alternative to OSS	89	58.2	53	34.6	9	5.9	2	1.3	153	100.0	3.50
To monitor students' behavior during ISS	32	37.2	37	43.0	13	15.1	4	4.7	86	100.0	3.13
To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior	40	33.3	56	46.7	18	15.0	6	5.0	120	100.0	3.08
To reduce the number of discipline problems	28	23.3	64	53.3	27	22.5	1	0.8	120	100.0	2.99
To influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately	24	17.6	80	58.8	31	22.8	1	0.7	136	100.0	2.93
To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent	22	19.3	61	53.5	27	23.7	4	3.5	114	100.0	2.89
To reduce truancy	21	20.6	54	52.9	22	21.6	5	4.9	102	100.0	2.89
To help students develop problem-solving skills	16	13.3	71	59.2	32	26.7	1	0.8	120	100.0	2.85
To reduce the students' feeling of alienation from school	17	29.8	18	31.6	15	26.3	7	12.3	57	100.0	2.79
To help students develop self-discipline	15	11.6	74	57.4	37	28.7	3	2.3	129	100.0	2.78
To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS	12	21.1	25	43.9	15	26.3	5	8.8	57	100.0	2.77
To help students improve their study habits	10	11.9	45	53.6	25	29.8	4	4.8	84	100.0	2.73
To reduce chronic tardiness	10	14.1	37	52.1	19	26.8	5	7.0	71	100.0	2.73
To help students improve their self-image	11	17.7	26	41.9	16	25.8	9	14.5	62	100.0	2.63
To assess students' progress in academic skills	7	12.3	26	45.6	10	17.5	14	24.6	57	100.0	2.46
To diagnose students' learning difficulties	5	9.8	18	35.3	17	33.3	11	21.6	51	100.0	2.33
To focus on instruction in the basic skills	2	4.8	19	45.2	11	26.2	10	23.8	42	100.0	2.31
To fashion activities in home and school survival training for students	3	12.5	5	20.8	7	29.2	9	37.5	24	100.0	2.08

students behavior during ISS;" "to reduce chronic tardiness;" and "to serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior." The items "to provide an alternative to OSS" and "to remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time" had the highest effectiveness ratings for all four school-size categories. Additionally, schools with 300 or fewer students had the highest mean (3.27) for the item "to monitor students' behavior during ISS." It should also be noted that as school size increased (≤ 300, 301 – 600, 601 – 900, and 900 plus) the mean for the same item decreased (3.27, 3.14, 3.06, and 3.00). However these differences in means are not great and may not be significant. Table 4.17 provides the details regarding school size, the goals, and the means.

Respondents were asked their perception of the status of ISS cases since the ISS program began in their school. Fifty-eight participants (33%) did not respond to the item or claimed they did not know. Omitting "don't know" and "no response" to the item resulted in a net total of 118 responses. Of the 118 participants to respondent to the item, 14.4% indicated that the number of ISS cases had increased greatly or moderately since the program began in their school, 39% reported that they had stayed the same, and 46.6% indicated that they had decreased moderately or greatly. The researcher concluded that there was little certainty about the status of ISS cases. Additionally, omitting the participants who did not respond to the item regarding the recidivism rate of ISS and those who indicated that they did not know the recidivism rate of ISS in their school resulted in a net total of 95 responses to the item. Of these 95 respondents, four percent indicated that the recidivism rate of ISS increased greatly, 38% reported that it stayed the same, and 58% indicated that the recidivism rate of ISS cases decreased moderately or greatly.

Forty-eight respondents (27.3%) did not respond to the item regarding the status of OSS cases or indicated that they did not know the status of OSS cases in their school. Omitting the "no response" and "don't know" responses to the item resulted in a net total of 128 responses. Of the 128 participants to respond to the item, 5.4% indicated that the number of OSS cases had increased moderately, 21.9% reported that the number of OSS cases had stayed the same, and 72.7% reported that the number of OSS cases had decreased moderately or greatly. Additionally, using only participants who provided a response regarding the recidivism rate of OSS and omitting the "no response" and "don't

Table 4.17

Student Enrolment and Effectiveness of ISS Program in Accomplishing Goals

Student Enrolment	Items	Mean	Items	Mean
≤ 300	• To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time (n=26)	3.42	• To reduce the number of discipline problems (n=18)	2.94
	• To provide an alternative to OSS (n=26)	3.39	• To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent (n=17)	2.82
	• To monitor students' behavior during ISS (n=15)	3.27	• To help students improve their study habits (n=17)	2.82
	• To reduce the students' feeling of alienation from school (n=11)	3.18	• To help students develop self-discipline (n=21)	2.81
	• To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior (n=26)	3.04	• To diagnose students' learning difficulties (n=9)	2.78
	• To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS (n=14)	3.00	• To reduce truancy (n=19)	2.68
	• To influence students, through counseling to chose to behave appropriately (n=23)	3.00	• To assess students' progress in academic skills (n=10)	2.60
	• To help students develop problem-solving skills (n=19)	3.00	• To help students improve their self-image (n=10)	2.60
			• To reduce chronic tardiness (n=11)	2.55
301 - 600	• To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time (n=72)	3.60	• To influence students, through counseling, to chose to behave appropriately (n=68)	2.88
	• To provide an alternative to OSS (n=79)	3.54	• To help students develop problem-solving skills (n=60)	2.82
	• To monitor students' behavior during ISS (n=50)	3.14	• To help students develop self-discipline (n=72)	2.78
	• To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior (n=65)	3.11	• To help students improve their study habits (n=40)	2.70
	• To reduce the number of discipline problems (n=73)	3.04	• To reduce the students' feeling of alienation from school (n=27)	2.63
	• To reduce truancy (n=49)	2.90	• To reduce chronic tardiness (n=37)	2.62
	• To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS (n=27)	2.89	• To help students improve their self-image (n=28)	2.50
	• To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent (n=65)	2.88		
601 - 900	• To influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately (n=32)	3.56	• To reduce truancy (n=23)	2.96
	• To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time (n=33)	3.55	• To reduce the students' feeling of alienation from school (n=14)	2.93
	• To serve as a negative consequences for inappropriate behavior (n=21)	3.14	• To help students improve their self-image (n=19)	2.89
	• To reduce chronic tardiness (n=14)	3.07	• To help students develop self-discipline (n=26)	2.88
	• To monitor students' behavior during ISS (n=16)	3.06	• To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent (n=23)	2.87
	• To reduce the number of discipline problems (n=21)	3.05	• To help students develop problem-solving skills (n=32)	2.87
	• To influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately (n=31)	3.00	• To help students improve their study habits (n=21)	2.81
			• To focus on instruction in the basic skills (n=13)	2.62
			• To assess students' progress in academic skills (n=14)	2.50
≥ 901	• To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time (n=12)	3.50	• To reduce chronic tardiness (n=9)	2.89
	• To provide an alternative to OSS (n=13)	3.31	• To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior (n=8)	2.88
	• To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent (n=8)	3.13	• To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS (n=5)	2.80
	• To reduce truancy (n=10)	3.10	• To help students develop problem-solving skills (n=8)	2.63
	• To monitor students' behavior during ISS (n=4)	3.00	• To assess students' progress in academic skills (n=4)	2.50
	• To influence students, through counseling, to chose to behave appropriately (n=13)	2.92	• To focus on instruction in the basic skills (n=6)	2.50
			• To help students improve their self-image (n=10)	2.50

know" responses to the item resulted in a net total of 88 responses. Of the 88 participants who provided a response, six percent indicated that there was a moderate increase in the recidivism rate of OSS, 28% reported that the recidivism rate of OSS had stayed the same, and 66% indicated that the recidivism rate of OSS had decreased moderately or greatly. The perceived status of ISS and OSS cases are detailed in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18

Respondents Perceptions of the Status of ISS and OSS Referrals and Recidivism Since ISS Began Operating (n=176)

Status of Following Since ISS Began Operation	No Response		Don't Know		Increase: Great		Increase: Moderate		Stayed Same		Decrease: Moderate		Decrease: Great	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
The number of ISS cases	19	(10.8)	39	(22.2)	3	(1.7)	14	(8.0)	46	(26.1)	36	(20.4)	19	(10.8)
Recidivism rate of ISS	36	(20.5)	45	(25.6)			4	(2.2)	36	(20.5)	44	(25.0)	11	(6.2)
The number of OSS cases	19	(10.8)	29	(16.5)			7	(4.0)	28	(15.9)	54	(30.7)	39	(22.1)
Recidivism rate of OSS	37	(21.0)	51	(29.0)			5	(2.8)	25	(14.2)	42	(23.9)	16	(9.1)

During the analysis of the interview data to ascertain the effectiveness of the ISS programs, four themes – *reduction in the number of repeaters, created problems, getting caught-up on assignments,* and *addressing reasons for referral* – emerged. In this section the findings on the effectiveness of ISS programs are presented according to these themes.

Reduction in the number of repeaters. Ralph, a principal, Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, and Ed, a teacher, reported that if the success of ISS was measured in terms of reducing the number of repeaters to ISS then, for the most part, ISS worked. Selwyn stated that a drop in the number of referrals, for a particular student, indicated that the student's behavior and schoolwork had improved. He explained, "Less ISS meant more work was being done in the classroom, and therefore better behavior." Ed said that some students did their ISS in his classroom during the first semester, and those students have not been referred to ISS, in his classroom, since then.

> That's not cold, hard facts; maybe they are going to somebody else's classroom. I'm not seeing any more students from other people's classrooms. So, from my point of view that's success. We are having fewer and fewer

repeaters. If you were to ask other teachers they would say the same thing.

Created problems. Elsie, a teacher, noted that her school's ISS policy of having the referred student discuss the misbehavior on the same day it occurred, with the referring teacher after school, gave rise to other inappropriate behaviors. One example was, some teachers did not allow those students to return to their class until the issue was resolved, and when the issue was not resolved those students were further assigned to ISS. Another inappropriate behavior was some students who refused to resolve the issue with their teacher resorted to skipping class. Elsie said, "Then it became an attendance issue. It escalated to something other than the initial issue."

Getting caught-up on assignments. Iris, a vice-principal, pointed out that ISS was very effective when used as a tool to help students get caught-up on assignments. She claimed that getting caught-up on assignments made students not only feel a sense of accomplishment, but also feel that some of the burden of schoolwork had been lifted off their shoulders.

Addressing reasons for referral. One of Elsie's (a teacher) concerns was whether ISS addressed the reason for a student's referral. She commented that it did if: 1) the student was willing to talk about the issue after school with the referring teacher and 2) being held accountable for one's behavior was prized by the student. Eric, a vice-principal, asserted that overall ISS did not teach the students much. He stated, "I don't think they learned anything from ISS other than [that] if they broke the rules there were consequences. ISS was more of a band-aid approach to [address] a situation."

Perceived opinions of others regarding ISS. Interviewees were asked to state what they perceived the opinions of the school's administrators, teachers, parents, and students were regarding ISS. The findings are discussed according to the order in which the groups were mentioned.

Administrators. Elsie and Ed, (teachers), Luke and Joe, (guidance counselors), Jason, (a principal), Bob, (a behavior management specialist), and Selwyn, (a Special Education teacher), felt that administrators generally supported ISS. However, both Bob and Ed thought that some administrators preferred OSS. Jason noted that administrators in his school realize that ISS has limited effectiveness, yet it was viewed as a better choice than OSS. He also said that with the impending reduction of $100,000 in next

year's school budget, ISS would be used less in the future because no one would be available to supervise the students, and it would not be fair to ask the secretaries to do so. Elsie pointed out that at times opinions about ISS varied among the administrators who were assigned to her school in recent years. She further stated that administrators did not supervise ISS. They supported it mainly because staff members indicated that they needed it. Ralph and David, principals, and Iris, a vice-principal, thought that administrators viewed ISS as a useful and effective disciplinary strategy. Iris explained that, before the hiring of someone to supervise the ISS program, students who misbehaved did their ISS time in an area outside the office. Administrators had to keep checking on those students and, according to Iris, administrators did not think that was a worthwhile way to spend their time. She said that with the hiring of an ISS teacher and having a special ISS room administrators have changed their opinion. "I think they [now] feel that it's a valuable tool."

Teachers. According to Iris (a vice-principal) and Elsie (a teacher), teachers hold varying views about ISS but, for the most part, felt that it was a valuable intervention strategy. Iris shared the opinion that teachers felt that they did not have to keep on nagging students. There was a bottom line, and ISS helped them attain their goal of trying to "make" students do their best in class. She further remarked that a few teachers wanted ISS to be a bit more structured and punitive. For example, ISS students, after working very hard during the day, may be granted the privilege of playing a game of chess with the ISS teacher. Iris stated, "When teachers saw a few non-traditional approaches to applying consequences I think some questioned that." Elsie claimed that some teachers, especially those who taught the academic courses, did not find it necessary to refer students to ISS while shop and Physical Education teachers did.

Nine interviewees thought that teachers liked ISS, and believed it was helpful. Jason and Ralph, principals, and Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, in particular, said that teachers liked it because the disruptive students were removed from the class and placed in another area where they were supervised, and this enabled the teacher to teach. ISS students were required to work on assignments and as a result they did not have to play "catch-up on class work," for the most part, when they returned to their regular class. In addition, Selwyn stressed that in ISS he also addressed the student's

inappropriate behavior, and he thought that this initiative made teachers feel that they were being supported.

Parents. Elsie (a teacher) indicated that she was not sure whether parents had given much thought to ISS; student referrals to ISS were in her opinion not questioned by them. However, eight interviewees were of the opinion that the vast majority of parents were satisfied with and preferred ISS to OSS. Iris (a vice-principal), believed that administrators' telephone calls to parents stating that their son or daughter was assigned an ISS were more positively received than calls informing them about their child's being assigned an OSS. Parents took offense with OSS calls and many times disagreements ensued over the phone. Joe's comments also highlighted parents' support for ISS. He stated that 90 to 95% of the parents were pleased with his school's ISS program, while a few did make the odd negative and critical comment. He cited the case in which one student not only called another a fat slob, but also aggressively sought money from the student. The aggressor was assigned an ISS and his parents did not share the views of school officials as to the seriousness of their child's actions. The parents felt that their son should not have been assigned an ISS for such a minor infraction.

Students. Iris and Eric (vice-principals), David (a principal) and Selwyn (a Special Education teacher), indicated their belief that students did not like having to spend time in ISS because it was an inconvenience, and because they disliked being isolated from their classmates and friends. Elsie (a teacher) noted that ISS was mostly perceived by students as punishment, and a lot of times the remedial aspect of it was lost. Iris stated that students were not scared of ISS and they did not leave the ISS room angry at the end of the day. She contended that they probably left the room thinking that: 1) they had gotten lots of work done, 2) they were not going to behave in that particular manner again, 3) they wanted to get back with their classmates, and 4) ISS is a sanctuary and a place they can go if they felt that they needed to work on things or get caught-up. Eric claimed that students who did not like ISS could be divided into two groups. He placed the serious students who wanted to be in school and were willing to take responsibility for their actions in one group, and students who chose to blame others instead of accepting responsibility for their actions, or lack of, in the other. David added that some students did not like ISS because they felt that they did not need it.

According to Jason (a principal) and Ed (a teacher), students would choose ISS over OSS mainly because their parents would be very unhappy if they had received an OSS. Ed stated that student would beg and do almost anything to stay at school after behaving inappropriately. He said that students gladly accepted an ISS, and smiled when they found out that they were being referred to ISS. On the other hand, Bob, a behavior management specialist, and Ralph, a principal, reported that for the most part students preferred an OSS.

Elsie (a teacher) and David (a principal) were of the opinion that students who did not care about their education and were at school just to socialize also had no favorable opinions about ISS. However, some students liked ISS. Joe, a guidance counselor, Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, and Elsie noted that some students liked the ISS room more than their home room mainly because: 1) they got more work done there than in their classroom because they stayed on task, 2) there were no disruptions as in the regular classroom, 3) at times they did not want to be in the regular classroom, 4) they liked the one-on-one they got during ISS, and 5) they had a bit of time to themselves.

Attitudes about ISS. Respondents were asked to indicate their degrees of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding various elements of their ISS programs. A large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements: a) guidance counselor(s) in our school support the ISS program; b) teachers in our school support the ISS program; c) parents of students at our school are in favor of the ISS program; d) the ISS program protects the rights of students to learn; e) it is better for students to be in ISS rather than suspended at home; f) isolation from peers as occurs in ISS is an effective strategy to deter misbehavior; g) the ISS program is effective in acting as a deterrent to misbehavior; h) the ISS program is effective in improving classroom behavior when students return from ISS; and i) the ISS program is effective in keeping students up-to-date with their regular schoolwork. A majority of the respondents also disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements: a) the stay in ISS is too short for much positive student behavior change to occur; b) too many students are assigned to ISS on any one day; c) ISS is over-used as a disciplinary strategy in our school; d) ISS provides an opportunity for positive intervention with the student; and e) the ISS program makes students aware that they are responsible for their actions. Additionally, the means

for the items "The ISS program has a good reputation with students," and "Preparing lessons for students in ISS is an added burden for teachers," were 3.48 and 3.04, respectively, and these were close to the response anchor of 3, undecided. The researcher concluded that these responses indicated that respondents were undecided about these items. The results, which include means, are reported in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19
Respondents Degrees of Agreement and Disagreement with ISS (n=176)

Variables	Mean	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Undecided (3)		Agree (4)		Strongly Agree (5)		Don't Know (6)	
		f	(%)	*f*	(%)	*f*	(%)	*f*	(%)	*f*	(%)	*f*	(%)
1. Guidance counselor(s) in our school support the ISS program	4.39	1	(0.6)	1	(0.6)	7	(4.0)	72	(40.9)	56	(31.8)	19	(10.8)
2. Teachers in our school support the ISS program	4.36			4	(2.3)	7	(4.0)	88	(50.0)	69	(39.2)	4	(2.3)
3. Parents of students at out school are in favor of the ISS program	4.34			2	(1.1)	6	(3.4)	92	(52.3)	53	(30.1)	18	(10.2)
4. The ISS program protects the rights of students to learn.	4.29	3	(1.7)	1	(0.6)	10	(5.7)	89	(50.6)	65	(36.9)	4	(2.3)
5. It is better for students to be in ISS rather than suspended at home	4.23	2	(1.1)	10	(5.7)	25	(14.2)	61	(34.7)	70	(39.8)	1	(0.6)
6. Isolation from peers, as occurs in ISS, is an effective strategy to deter misbehavior	4.08	3	(1.7)	3	(1.7)	10	(5.7)	111	(63.1)	41	(23.3)	3	(1.7)
7. The ISS program is effective in acting as a deterrent to misbehavior	3.99			8	(4.5)	27	(15.3)	105	(59.7)	24	(13.6)	9	(5.1)
8. The ISS program is effective in improving classroom behavior when students return from ISS	3.96	1	(0.6)	6	(3.4)	33	(18.8)	105	(59.7)	22	(12.5)	6	(3.4)
9. The ISS program is effective in keeping students up-to-date with their regular school work.	3.75	6	(3.4)	18	(10.2)	24	(13.6)	83	(47.2)	33	(18.8)	7	(4.0)
10. The ISS program has a good reputation with students	3.48	3	(1.7)	22	(12.5)	28	(15.9)	64	(36.4)	12	(6.8)	34	(19.3)
11. Preparing lessons for students in ISS is an added burden for teachers	3.04	18	(10.2)	49	(27.8)	11	(6.3)	72	(40.9)	16	(9.1)	6	(3.4)
12. The stay in ISS is too short for much positive student behavior change to occur.	2.37	22	(12.5)	75	(42.6)	40	(22.7)	26	(14.8)	1	(0.6)	6	(3.4)
13. Too many students are assigned to ISS on any one day	2.05	57	(32.4)	74	(42.0)	17	(9.7)	7	(4.0)	4	(2.3)	12	(6.8)
14. ISS is over-used as a disciplinary strategy in our school	2.01	65	(36.9)	76	(43.2)	13	(7.4)	10	(5.7)	3	(1.7)	5	(2.8)
15. ISS provides an opportunity for positive intervention with the student	1.87	48	(27.3)	91	(51.7)	25	(14.2)	4	(2.3)			3	(1.7)
16. The ISS program makes students aware that they are responsible for their actions	1.60	68	(38.6)	93	(52.8)	10	(5.7)			1	(0.6)	1	(0.6)

Strengths of ISS. Respondents (n=167) listed, in an open-ended item, what they believed to be the three main strengths of their ISS program. Specifically, about 33% reported that its main strength was its ability to remove the disruptive student from the regular classroom, 25% indicated that it was its tendency to serve as a deterrent, some students hated being isolated from their peers; and 20% claimed that it was its ability to have students do their homework and get caught-up with assignments. The other strengths were categorized according to the following themes – *nature of the program, assisted in keeping students in school, ISS had staff's, students' and parents' support, ISS encouraged self-discipline and protected rights,* and *intervention and counseling.*

Nature of the program. Fairness, consistency, a restrictive environment, and an immediate strategy to deal with misbehavior, were terms used to characterize ISS. ISS was also viewed as a clearly defined consequence for inappropriate behavior, and students knew that the number of days of referral to ISS could be increased if the need arose. It was also pointed out that the intent of school personnel was to show students that they have choices – a choice for help, support and incentives, or time away from the group. ISS offered continuous supervision by video camera, teachers, instructional assistants, and administrators. It called for detailed documentation, emphasized the importance of academics and established clear expectations for students and staff. One respondent claimed that the ISS program respects students' diversity of needs, has rules that are implemented in a fashion which serves as a deterrent, is non-judgmental, and provides assistance to students during a difficult and disturbing time.

Assisted in keeping students in school. A few respondents indicated that ISS kept students in school and required students and teachers to work on behavior problems. It was an alternative to OSS, and it gave students the opportunity to work in a smaller area with a smaller student-teacher ratio.

ISS had staff's, students', and parents' support. Parents and staff tended to support ISS. About two percent of the respondents also noted that some students supported the program

ISS encouraged self-discipline and protected rights. About eight percent of the respondents noted that ISS provided students the opportunity to reflect on their behavior and accept responsibility for their action. It not only helped students build self-esteem,

but also protected the rights of others to learn. Additionally, it was viewed as time-out for the referring teacher and student, and this helped both "cool down."

Intervention and counseling. Intervention strategies included placing students in a restrictive environment as a logical consequence for inappropriate behavior; behavior modification; and one-on-one, group, and follow-up counseling. At times, ISS was individualized to meet the needs of students.

Weaknesses of ISS. Respondents (n=162) listed what they claimed to be the three main weaknesses of their ISS program. Specifically, 33% reported the need for a specific ISS room, 28% reported the lack of adequate supervision of the ISS program, and 14% suggested the failure to conduct "follow-ups" with former ISS students. The themes that emerged from the remaining suggested weaknesses were as follows: *ineffective with students, facilities and resources, administrative issues, students issues and time issues affecting students, staffing problems and student assignment problems,* and *other major issues.*

Ineffective with students. ISS was based on the premise that students wanted to be at school, but some respondents indicated that was not always the case. One respondent indicated that ISS did not always address the students' needs, and thus was deemed ineffective as a punishment. One respondent wrote:

> The whole point seems to be a punitive response to the [student's misbehavior]. I don't see any indication that any belief exists that the student might actually be motivated to modify [his/her] behavior. 'Get her out of my face for a while' appears to be the teacher's need.

Two respondents remarked that some students did not take ISS seriously, and in some cases it was viewed as a reward – some students liked it. A few respondents reported that some students often fell behind in their current work while in ISS. Those students may have spent their ISS time catching-up in a subject, but while they did they fell further behind in the classes they were missing. Several respondents indicated that not all teachers realized the benefit of ISS, and some students did not obey the ISS rules. In addition, there were too many repeaters.

Facilities and resources issues. A few respondents wrote that sometimes the ISS rooms were too small, were poorly ventilated, or were located in "high traffic" areas.

Some also noted that textbooks and carrels for their ISS room were in short supply.

Administrative issues. Inconsistency in using ISS, using it as a "dumping ground," under- and over-use of ISS, and inadequate communication with parents and among staff about ISS were some of the administrative problems reported by respondents who also noted that ISS placed a burden on administrators' and teachers' time; having to give up some "prep" time to supervise ISS was quite vexing for some teachers. A few respondents reported that too many people were involved in ISS, and various teachers held different expectations for it. In addition, the monitoring of ISS students by clerical staff had an impact on their regular duties.

Students issues and time issues affecting students. Some respondents indicated that there was a need to limit not only the number of ISS referrals a student could receive per term, but also the number of students in ISS at one time. There were also concerns about the lack of monitoring of students' work and the scant academic help they received. Finally, some respondents reported that the length of referral to ISS was too short.

Staffing problems and student assignment problems. The failure of teachers to send assignments or enough assignments for students in ISS was viewed as a major problem by some. However, several respondents explained that the nature of the courses they taught did not make providing assignments for their students who were serving an ISS feasible; also preparing assignments for ISS students was an added burden on teachers. Some respondents expressed concerns about the lack of a specific full-time ISS teacher, the lack of ISS training for teachers, insufficient staff to supervise ISS, and isolation of ISS staff from their colleagues because of the nature of ISS.

Other major issues. ISS not being a formal program, not having a definite purpose, being primarily punitive, and not being evaluated frequently were concerns shared by many respondents. Additionally, respondents cited the lack of the following as problem areas: counseling, funding, parental support, ISS data-collection procedures, and ISS rules.

Suggestions for improving ISS. Eighty-two percent of the respondents made recommendations for improving their ISS program. Specifically, 25% listed the need for a specific, adequate ISS room; 18% mentioned the need for a full-time ISS staff; and 15% reported the need to incorporate counseling in the ISS program. Interviewees Joe, a

guidance counselor, Eric, a vice-principal, and Elsie, a teacher, also spoke of making counseling part of their ISS program. Joe remarked that a ratio of one guidance counselor to every 400 students would enhance the ISS program; adequate counseling would then become a reality. Elsie contended that ISS should focus more on therapeutic aspects, rather than disciplinary, when dealing with inappropriate student behavior. The other recommendations suggested were categorized according to the following themes that emerged during analysis – *students, ISS facilities, other staffing issues, communication, parental involvement, referral,* and *over-all strategies.*

Students. Limiting the number of students in ISS at one time, consistency in assigning students to ISS, having them stay in ISS for longer periods of time when necessary, providing more assignments when necessary for ISS students, having them complete their assignments while in ISS, having them work on behavior packages, incorporating reparation, and not allowing ISS students to take part in extra-curricular activities were the key ingredients for improving ISS in the opinion of various respondents. The need to provide academic help for ISS students was also noted. However, one interviewee, Ed, a teacher, was concerned about teachers not having enough "prep" time and having to add that component to their already heavy work-load.

ISS facilities. Respondents suggested that better facilities were needed to improve their ISS program. Included in this facilities issue were where the ISS room should be located, and the need for study carrels, books, and computers.

Other staffing issues. Some respondents remarked that teachers were needed to supervise ISS, while others suggested that fewer ISS supervisors were needed so as to increase consistency in ISS room expectations. Elsie, a teacher, and Selwyn a Special Education teacher, noted that some of the teachers who supervise ISS did not do what they were supposed to do. Elsie asked, "How do you follow-up on that without slapping teachers' hands? Who would name-call on them?" There were some argument that all teachers should be held accountable for the success of the program. In-service ISS training, educating staff in proper follow-up procedure, and complete teacher support for ISS were all mentioned as desirable for improving ISS.

Communication. Other suggestions which would result in an improvement in ISS included the following: 1) the need to improve communication with all members of

staff regarding the status of their ISS student, 2) the need to communicate with teachers about assignments for ISS students, and 3) the need to inform staff, students, and parents about the purpose of ISS.

Parental involvement. Some respondents indicated that the ISS program would improve if it had parental support and involvement. Other suggestions that would lead to improvement were the need for parents to be educated about ISS, the need for teachers to inform parents by telephone prior to placing students in ISS, and the need for follow-up contact with parents at the end of the student's stay in ISS.

Referral. Respondents reported that guidelines to determine when or under what conditions an ISS referral should occur would enhance their ISS program. In addition, limiting students to a set number of referrals to ISS; and having other consequences for repeat offenders, because ISS did not seem to deter them, were suggested.

Over-all strategies. Adequate funding of ISS, having ISS data collection and evaluation procedures, and having clearly spelled-out ISS rules, objectives, and philosophy were ideas for improving ISS that were voiced by respondents. Finally, other ISS enhancing elements cited by respondents were: a formal ISS program, greater involvement of outside agencies in ISS, and having teachers also focus on positive in-class student behaviors. One of the interviewees Elsie, a teacher, claimed that the integration of services in her school that would help students resolve conflict and manage anger would improve the ISS program.

Daily Operation of ISS

Research *Question 12* sought information regarding the daily operation of the ISS program. Categorized under Daily Operation of the ISS program are the following: staffing, communication, ISS rules, class assignments, record keeping, and counseling. The research findings relevant to these elements are the focus of this section.

Staffing. There was clearly a variety of staffing patterns mentioned by respondents. Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that the principal and assistant/vice principal worked in the ISS program, 40% mentioned that there were two or more teachers who rotated into and out of the program, and 39% stated that guidance counselors, clerical staff, and teacher's assistants - two of whom were specifically hired,

in two schools, as ISS supervisors - manned the program. Additionally, about 9% of the respondents reported that behavior management personnel (psychiatric nurse, rehabilitation practitioners, and behavior assistants), librarians, and a family support worker staffed the ISS program. Also mentioned was that in one of the schools the ISS room was monitored by camera and microphone, and in another the ISS student was required to serve his /her ISS time in another teacher's classroom.

Communication. Elsie (a teacher) and Joe (a guidance counselor) indicated that, in their school, teachers have the authority to assign students to ISS, and once that decision was made the referring teacher had to inform the ISS teacher by telephone about it. Elsie also pointed out that teachers have the choice regarding telephoning parents to inform them about their son's or daughter's referral to ISS, and no documentation of the incident was sent home at that time. In other words parents/guardians were not usually informed of their child's referrals to ISS until the sixth; then administrators stepped in and involved parents in the process. However, in Joe's school, at the end of the day, the ISS teacher telephoned all parents whose son or daughter was referred to ISS to inform them of the referral. Joe further stated that the names of the assigned students were e-mailed to all teachers, and if the students were referred for more than one class period work was requested for them from the teachers. Selwyn, a Special Education teacher, said that following the referral of his Special Education students to ISS parents were telephoned and told about it. He also spoke of writing in the student's communication book, on a daily basis, the assigned homework and other pertinent information including whether the student had a good or bad day. Administrators and teachers were also informed about the referral, and the student did not start serving ISS time until the next day.

Jason (a principal) and Iris (a vice-principal) reported that only administrators have the authority to assign students to ISS while in Bob's (a behavior management specialist) school administrators reserved such authority for periods of time beyond a half-day. These three interview participants indicated that both parents and teachers were informed of the referrals. The telephone and a formal letter were used to inform parents, while teachers were informed by e-mail, which, depending on the length of referral, contained a request that work be forwarded for the ISS student to do while serving the

suspension. Iris added that in her school parents had to be notified even though the student's ISS was only one class period long.

ISS rules and procedures. Joe, a guidance counselor, in his comments about ISS rules, noted that a referral slip accompanied the student to the ISS room, and upon arrival the student was seated then asked to describe the incident, in writing, that precipitated his or her referral. The ISS teacher was required to make no judgment about the incident; however, that was dealt with accordingly by staff who checked the student's version of the incident to see how it corresponded with that of the referring teacher. In both Elsie's (a teacher) and Joe's (a guidance counselor) schools, ISS students were obliged to complete and submit a behavior improvement plan. First time referrals, according to the document provided by Joe, were required to spend a minimum of 30 minutes in the ISS room, and no student was allowed to return to the class-period from which he or she was removed.

The eleven interviewees reported that ISS students were required to work quietly on academic assignments. Elsie, a teacher, Ralph, a principal, and Bob, a behavior management specialist, pointed out that, in addition, their students were required to work on various behavior packages. Elsie claimed that students rarely worked on assignments. She said that it depended on a) whether the students were willing to resolve the problem, b) whether they "connected" with the teacher who happened to be supervising ISS at that time, and c) whether they were too angry. Sometimes they were too angry and slept instead, and sometimes they became aggressive and vocal and had to be referred directly to an administrator. David, a principal, stated that when ISS students had questions about assignments they had to get permission from the ISS teacher to visit the classroom teacher to seek clarification about the assignment, and such visits were limited to break-time. Ralph pointed out that students in ISS were not permitted to take their option classes, although, in some cases they were allowed to take Physical Education classes with students in the *Turning Point* program. Finally, in Elsie's school at the end of the day, ISS students were required to meet with the referring teacher to discuss and seek closure to it. In Bob's school if it was a one-day ISS, at the end of the day students had to meet with the *Turning Point* coordinator. After the meeting the coordinator e-mailed teachers stating that the ISS had been served and the student would be returning to the

regular classroom the next day.

When asked how the referred students were informed about the ISS rules, nine of the 176 respondents did not provide an answer, one reported not knowing, and one indicated that the question was not applicable, resulting in a net total of 165 usable responses.

Forty-two percent of the respondents chose the alternative that ISS rules were reviewed at the beginning of each day for the benefit of the assigned students, while 32% checked the alternative that the ISS rules were listed in the student's handbook and newsletters. Rounding off the top three methods of informing the referred student of the ISS rules was the "enclosing of the rules in a letter to parents or guardian" when a student was assigned an ISS. This strategy was reported by 22% of the participants. Fifteen percent of the participants indicated that the ISS rules were posted in the ISS room, and fewer than 15% indicated that the ISS rules were discussed with each student, usually at the beginning of his/her tenure in ISS, or that the ISS rules were identical to classroom rules, and students were informed of these throughout the year. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one response.)

Respondents were asked to select, from a list of three alternatives provided, the rules that ISS students were required to follow during lunch time, and to specify others that were not listed. One hundred and sixty-three responses to the item were usable. Sixty-two percent of the participants reported that suspendees were required to have lunch in the ISS room, four percent indicated that suspendees' lunch time was scheduled when other students were not in the cafeteria, one percent selected the alternative "suspendees have lunch in an isolated area in the cafeteria," and 33% checked "other" and reported each of the following rules or procedures followed by ISS students during lunch break: a) ISS students were allowed to have lunch with the general student body; 18.4%. b) suspendees were required to have lunch in an isolated area in the office; 11%, c) ISS students were required, at times, to spend lunch break at home; 1.8%, d) suspendees were required to do school-service duties, such as picking up garbage, at noon or after school; 1.2%, and e) there were no specific lunch time rules for ISS students.

A net total of 170 participants responded to the item regarding rules and

procedures for restroom breaks. A majority (71%) indicated that ISS students were permitted to go to the restroom individually, and unescorted, while about 22% indicated that students were escorted, individually, three percent reported that the group goes at a designated time unescorted, and 0.6% selected the alternative "students are escorted as a group and monitored by the ISS teacher." Eleven percent or fewer of the participants were associated with each of the following five rules and procedures for restroom breaks: a) suspendees had to seek permission from ISS staff before going to the washroom; 5.2%, b) suspendees were permitted to go to the washroom before or after the other grades change periods; 4.1%, c) ISS students were not permitted to have a washroom break; 0.6%, d) suspendees were usually given one washroom break per day; 0.6%, and e) the granting of a washroom break depended on the reason for ISS and the situation at the time of the student's request; 0.6%.

The 176 questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate whether ISS students were allowed to participate in extracurricular activities. Five indicated that they did not know, and 14 did not answer the question. However, 50 respondents marked the "yes" alternative while 107 marked "no."

Respondents were asked to select, from a list of alternatives provided, the activities that were restricted or forbidden in the ISS program, and to specify other forbidden activities. There were 173 usable responses to the item. Ninety percent of the participants marked students socializing in ISS, 83% marked sleeping, and 72% marked moving around the room. In addition, a few (13%) suggested that ISS students were not allowed to do the following: a) leave the room without permission; 4.1%, b) do nothing (They were expected to work quietly on their assignments.); 2.9%, c) listen to music on their walkman or CD players in the room; 1.7%, d) use the telephone without permission; 1.1%, e) eat or drink during class; 0.6%, f) write notes to friends; 0.6%, g) have washroom breaks; 0.6%, h) have cafeteria privileges; 0.6%, and i) swear and harass other students; 0.6%. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one of the alternative responses.)

Respondents were asked to select one of two potential consequences that suspendees suffered when they disobeyed ISS rules, and to specify other possible consequences. Of the 162 who responded to the item, 54% chose the second alternative,

namely, that students who disobeyed ISS rules received an OSS, while 43% chose the first alternative, that suspendees were assigned to ISS for an extra day. A few (22%) participants suggested that students who disobeyed ISS rules were: required to have lunch in the ISS room or in the cafeteria when other students were not there, referred to an administrator, given after-school detention, and warned. Even fewer (9%) reported having no policy regarding ISS rule infraction (They have not had to deal with such infractions.), and it was left to the teacher's discretion. The total of these percentages exceeds 100% because some respondents chose an alternative provided and added one or more other consequences.

Of the 173 school personnel responding to the four-part question regarding the requirements that must be met before a suspendee was allowed to return to the regular classroom, 79% reported that students had to serve the specified time before they got out of ISS, 52% indicated that students also had to complete all assigned class work prior to getting out, and 18% claimed that students could earn credit for good behavior which could reduce the initial specified time. Nineteen percent also suggested that: the suspendee had to follow ISS rules and stay on task (5.2%), an administrator had to meet with parents/guardians, depending on the reason for referral to ISS (4.6%), the suspendee had to meet with the referring teacher after school and resolve the issue (3.5%), the suspendee had to sign an Action Plan sheet, and also have it signed by parent/guardian, teacher, and an administrator (2.9%), and the suspendee had to complete a learning packet on the specific behavior (2.3%).

Assignments. The findings regarding assignments for ISS students, including those who had been referred repeatedly to ISS are the focus of this section.

In response to the question regarding what students did while in ISS, 97% of the participants chose the alternative response indicating that ISS students worked on class work assigned by the regular classroom teacher, and 78% indicated that students did homework assigned by the regular classroom teacher. These were followed, in order of magnitude, by: a) having the students read library books (44%), b) work on pre-designed work packets or booklets (29%), and c) take an ability test (3.4%). Four percent or fewer of the respondents checked the "other" category and suggested the following: a) having ISS students do work assigned by the principal or assistant principal, b) having ISS

students work on strategies to enhance work or study habits, and c) having ISS students work on project-based activities. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one of the alternatives provided.)

In responding "Always," "Usually," "Occasionally," "Never," or "Other" (Please Specify) 43% of the respondents indicated that ISS students in their school were "occasionally" assisted with their work, while 40% noted that the students in their school were "usually" assisted with their work. Some participants (11%) reported that ISS students in their school were "always" assisted with their work, and only a few (5%) indicated that ISS students in their school were "never" assisted with their work. One respondent noted in the "Other" category that when a teacher was unable to help an ISS student with the assignment the student was referred to the teacher who submitted the assignment.

Ten of the eleven interviewees in responding to the question concerning what students do while in ISS and whether they are given any remedial instructions or tutoring while there reported that ISS supervisors helped referred students with their assignments, when the need arose. These interviewees reiterated the claim made by one of the respondents on the questionnaire. The interviewees reported that when the ISS supervisor could not assist the student with the assignment the student was referred to the referring teacher or the teacher who had forwarded the assignment, for assistance. Elsie, a teacher, pointed out that ISS students were expected to fill out the *Case Statement Form*, and work on assignments, but that they rarely did. She said that on many occasions supervisors of ISS students used the time to make telephone calls, mark assignments, and prepare lesson plans. Iris, a vice-principal, claimed that her school's ISS teacher worked one-on-one with ISS students, especially first-time referrals. She also stated that many of the students referred to ISS were struggling academically, and they were helped as much as possible during their tenure in ISS. Iris noted that she usually informed the referring teacher, after being informed by the ISS teacher, that a student needed some academic assistance.

Ed, a teacher, indicated that ISS students were not likely to receive any remedial help from the teacher in whose classroom they were serving the ISS. ISS students were required to cover the same material as their regular classmates. However, he believed

that if they received any remedial help from their regular teachers, the help was, in part, in the form of class work that was tailored to their needs.

In responding "Yes" or "No" to the two-part question, most of the respondents (82%) indicated that students received credit for satisfactorily completing assignments while in ISS, whereas 12% reported that students did not receive credit for this work. The remaining respondents (6%) did not provide a response to the item.

During the interview when the matter of repeat referral was raised, Ralph (a principal), noted that repeat referrals were required to work on behavior packages for the particular infraction, even though they had completed them before. On the other hand, Iris (a vice-principal), asserted that having students work on behavior packages was a waste of time because the packages were not personal enough. She reflected that students needed to talk about what they had done, and what they needed to do in order to avoid getting in trouble. Based on her personal experience, she concluded that behavior packages merely kept students busy.

After identifying the over-all assignments, respondents were asked to describe the contents of the work packets or booklets, if these resources were used in their ISS program. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents claimed that the item was not applicable and 36% did not respond to it. However, 14% marked the alternative provided that indicated the work packets/booklets contained social skills exercises, 10% indicated they were basic reading comprehension exercises, 10% indicated basic math skills exercises, 8% indicated they were values clarification exercises, and 7% marked the response category indicating they were basic English skills exercises. As these numbers reveal, some respondents checked more than one of the alternatives provided. Thirteen respondents (7%) mentioned other types of exercises contained in the work packet or booklets: a) assignments that required students to reflect on their behavior (5.7%), b) Physical Education activities (1%), and c) assignments from Distance Education material (0.6%).

Record keeping. Study participants were asked to indicate, from a list provided, which of seven types of data were collected in the ISS program and to specify any others not listed. There were 157 usable responses to the item. "The reason for referral to ISS" was selected by the majority of respondents (66%). At the other end no data were

collected on the ethnicity of the referred students. Thirteen percent of the participants reported in the "Other" response category that: a) no data were collected in the ISS program (One respondent said that the school ran its ISS program on an ad hoc basis, and students were unsupervised at times. "We all participated in the decision to have the student in ISS so we don't need to collect data." Another respondent reported that no data were collected because ISS was not used frequently.) (8.9%), b) a list was kept of the names of the persons who assigned the students to ISS (2.5%), c) a list was kept of the names of the students and the dates they were assigned to ISS (1.3%), and d) the nature of work completed by ISS students was documented (0.6%). At their interviews, Iris and Eric (vice-principals), reported that they also kept "stats" on repeat referrals – students referred to ISS more than twice. The results are provided in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20
Data Collected in the ISS Program

Items	Responses (n=157)	
	f	%
Reason for referral to ISS	104	66.2
The number of students referred to ISS	71	45.2
Written description of each student's behavior while in ISS	46	29.3
Data on grade level	41	26.1
Recidivism rates	31	19.7
Other	21	13.4
Data on gender of student	10	6.4
Data on ethnicity of student	0	0

Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one response.

Counseling. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of six response categories how counseling was incorporated in their ISS program and to specify any other ways not listed. Seven respondents (4%) did not provide an answer to the question, and this resulted in 169 usable responses. Twenty-two percent of the participants indicated that counseling was not part of their school' ISS program, while 52% claimed that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with some ISS students. A little over seven percent reported that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with all ISS students, and b) about seven percent reported that it was conducted by the guidance counselor in small groups with some students. Nineteen percent checked the "other" response category and noted that

counseling was conducted by: a) teachers on a one-to-one basis (7.4%), b) the principal or assistant principal with all ISS students on a one-to-one basis (6.8%), c) the Curriculum/Team Leader, in charge of the grade level, with all ISS students (1.7%), d) Behavior Management staff (1.1%), e) the Family Support worker or the school psychologist, when necessary (1.1%), and f) a Social Work student, during practicum, with ISS students in small groups (0.6%).

Interviewees, when asked who counseled ISS students, stated that counseling was conducted by administrators, teachers, teachers' assistants, and/or guidance counselors. The findings regarding the counseling techniques that were employed are presented under two categories that emerged during analysis of the interview data: a) administrators, teachers and teachers' assistants, and b) guidance counselors.

Administrators, teachers and teachers' assistants. Interviewees indicated that the counseling techniques employed by members of this group include one or more of the following: a) a private review of the inappropriate behavior with the ISS student, b) formulation of alternative behavior choices with the student, c) writing exercises that included a personal student behavior plan and a plan to do better academically, d) a discussion of the student's feelings about school and the things that the student did right, e) formulation of goals for student's future behavior, f) probing to get to the root of the problem and possible changes at home, g) having students vent their feelings, in general, h) discussing social skills that are needed to handle daily living, and i) taking responsibility for one's behavior.

Selwyn (a Special Education teacher), David and Jason (principals), and Iris (a vice-principal), indicated that all ISS students were counseled individually, at least once, during their stay in the program. Elsie (a teacher) claimed that ISS students were required to fill out a questionnaire, and the purpose of that exercise was not so much to assess blame as to encourage students to reflect on the behavior that resulted in their being assigned an ISS. However, when students refused to fill out the questionnaire staff took no further action. Elsie added that although the onus was on the ISS teacher and student to discuss the issue, that depended on whether the referred student had a relationship with the teacher who was supervising ISS at the time. She concluded that counseling was not a strong component of the school's ISS program. David stated that

ISS students were required to discuss the issue that resulted in their referral, with a staff member, before they were permitted to return to the regular classroom. Depending on the behavior, such as a student-staff conflict, students were allowed to select a staff member to provide the counseling. David further remarked that the counseling techniques adopted in his school and their ISS program were based on his writings, the work of Dreikurs, Barbara Coloroso, and Don Dinkmeyer. In contrast, Iris, Jason, and Elsie noted that when teachers and/or administrators thought that ISS students had a serious problem they referred those students to a guidance counselor. Jason reported that because of budget cuts, in the following year his school would not have a guidance counselor. He would have to take on that responsibility. Three participants also indicated on the questionnaires that their schools did not have a guidance counselor.

Guidance counselors. Six of the eleven interviewees indicated that the guidance counselors counseled ISS students. Elsie (a teacher) stated that guidance counselors, like teachers, also had to supervise the ISS room, and when they were there the students probably had a better experience because the issues were dealt with from a counseling standpoint. She thought that on those occasions students viewed ISS as therapeutic rather than punitive. Ed (a teacher) and Bob (a behavior management specialist) noted that ISS students who had severe problems, and/or were viewed as at-risk students were referred to a counselor or mental health therapist who visited the school once a week, all day long.

The reported counseling techniques used included one or more of the following: a) one-on-one discussion of the behavior that got the student in trouble, b) alternative ways of handling the situation, c) developing a plan to ensure that the behavior was not repeated, d) group counseling sessions, and e) behavior management sessions.

Ralph (a principal) and Luke (a guidance counselor) indicated that ISS students were counseled on an as-need basis, while Eric (a vice-principal) claimed that they were usually counseled once, but that some ISS students received counseling on an on-going basis because of the nature of their problem. Bob (a behavior management specialist) said that he usually spent half an hour talking to students who were referred to ISS for the first time, and a bit of his counseling strategies were adopted from Glasser's Reality Therapy. On the other hand, Joe (a guidance counselor) met with students, one-on-one, in the ISS room during their second referral. That discussion focused on why they were

there and what they needed to do to stay out of ISS. Additionally, after five referrals students were required to participate in two noon-hour sessions with Joe.

Bob (a behavior management specialist) and Joe (a guidance counselor) reported that they make themselves "visible" to the students. Bob explained that he was often in the hallway during breaks, while Joe indicated that he coached and ran noon-hour hockey. Joe also claimed that school personnel needed to establish a relationship with students. Nevertheless, although he had a good relationship with some students, when it came to counseling them they did not "open-up" during the first session. He reported that even after the fifth session they were still trying to determine whether he could be trusted. Additionally, Bob remarked that he was not a teacher; instead his training was in psychiatry and counseling. In his view schools had erred in the area of counseling because they usually picked, as school counselor, the nice teacher who could "talk" to students a bit, but did not have the necessary counseling background.

Emergent Themes

A number of findings emerged, during the course of data analysis, that were not part of the framework conceptualized for the study (see Figure 1, p. 50). The emergent themes were "informal ISS" and "part of the over-all discipline."

Informal ISS

Some respondents indicated on the questionnaire that their ISS was quite informal. Three participants from three schools in which some respondents reported that ISS was informally conducted were interviewed to gain further insight on "informal ISS." The findings are reported below.

ISS was viewed as being informal in their school by some questionnaire respondents because it: a) was in the developmental stage, b) was located in the general office and rarely used, c) lacked staff and a special room in which to operate, d) lacked operational principles and rules, e) lacked counseling for students, f) was thought of by staff as merely a strategy to accomplish removal of students – "Get the student out of my face for a while," g) was an ad hoc approach used to address students' misbehavior, and h) was not a full time program.

Elsie (a teacher) attempted to define "informal ISS" by starting with a discussion of the term "formal ISS." She voiced the opinion that "formal ISS" meant that: a) funds were specifically earmarked for ISS, b) goals and evaluation procedures were pre-established, c) ISS was based on a philosophy which was designed by a specific group, and d) ISS would be therapeutic and not merely punitive. She concluded that her school's ISS program did not measure up to those criteria, and maybe that led some staff members to think that it was informal. Luke (a guidance counselor) indicated that some of his colleagues used the term to describe the school's ISS because: a) the school's ISS was not documented, b) ISS was somewhat an isolated process, and c) to a certain extent other staff members were not really involved in ISS; the assistant principal executed the process then informed the teacher concerned about the resolution that was achieved. Ed (a teacher) expressed the opinion that it was a misconception for some staff members to think that ISS was informal. He stated that in his school it was only a year old and maybe it was still foreign to some teachers. He also noted that when staff used the term "informal" they probably were referring to the handling of discipline within their classroom on an informal basis.

Part of Over-all Discipline

Interviewees stated that ISS was a phase in the discipline process. Specifically, the findings on how ISS fits into the school's overall methods of discipline are discussed below under *teachers' strategies, school's philosophy, and positive and negative consequences*. The section concludes with the other reported alternatives for addressing inappropriate behavior.

Teachers' strategies. Joe (a guidance counselor), Iris (a vice-principal), Selwyn (a Special Education teacher), and Elsie and Ed (teachers) claimed that, first, teachers had to use classroom management strategies to manage student behavior before resorting to ISS, or referring students to an administrator. In Joe's school as he explained, teachers had the authority to refer students, who indulged in "moderately serious" misbehavior, to ISS. He indicated that ISS had a very positive impact on the classroom environment. As a result, teachers got to spend more time on instruction, instead of having to spend considerable time on disciplinary issues.

School's philosophy. Bob (a behavior management specialist) stated that his school's philosophy was "Do what's best for the students." Accordingly, what was best was not always an OSS, but sometimes an ISS. Having students who misbehaved stay in the building gave staff the opportunity to work with them on their behavior and problem-solving skills. Eric (a vice-principal) too supported this approach as he stated, everyone has the right to: a) be in school, b) feel safe in school, and c) learn and develop his/her skills. Thus anyone who infringes on those rights should be dealt with accordingly: ISS removes the student, who infringes on the rights of others, from the regular classroom.

Positive and negative consequences. David (a principal) pointed out that his school has a series of interventions aimed at improving students' behavior. When students behaved appropriately they were rewarded. For example, the school has weekly incentives – positive phone calls home and fun activities – for students who were punctual. The student of the month not only has lunch with an RCMP officer but also goes for a ride in a little Volkswagen bus with the officer. On the other hand, according to Luke (a guidance counselor) and Ralph and Jason (principals) when students interfered with instruction, learning, and the well being of others, they suffered the consequence: losing the privilege of being with the class for a period of time. Ralph said that ISS was the consequence immediately before OSS.

The alternatives for addressing student behavior have changed little over the years. Administrators and teachers still select from disciplinary methods which include: detention, OSS, parent conferences, behavior contracts, referral to an administrator, clean-up duty, positive re-enforcers, home schooling, involving the police, and expulsion (also see Table 4.9).

Summary

The information sources for the study were school documents, ISS questionnaires, and interviews. The questionnaires were completed predominantly by teachers, principals, assistant/vice-principals, and guidance counselors.

The three most frequently suggested reasons for developing and implementing an ISS program were: a) "to provide an alternative to OSS," b) "to provide a quiet environment in which students could work on their assignment(s)," and c) "to keep

students in school in a supervised environment." Other suggested reasons included the nature of the student body – for example, mentally challenged students, and students who were diagnosed with behavior disorders by a psychologist or psychiatrist – and the nature of the program offered by the school – Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) and Special Education programs.

Principals, assistant principals, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and a student participated in the development and implementation of the various ISS programs. Thirty-two (25%) of the 124 schools contacted by telephone did not have an ISS program, and the four main reasons for this were: a) "Our school does not believe that ISS is effective," b) "Our school does not have the money to fund an ISS program," c) "Our school lacks the facilities," and d) "Our school lacks staff to supervise ISS."

When schools with ISS programs were described according to school size and district, the findings indicated that schools with a student population of 301- 600 had the highest percentage, 52%, of ISS programs. Included in this category were 23 public and nine separate schools. Schools with a student population of 901-1200, and 1201-1500 had the lowest percentage, 3%, of ISS programs.

The number of years ISS has been in operation ranged from less than a year to 30 years. Additionally, the suggested philosophy behind the ISS program was either that of a custodial/strict authority or freedom with control/healthy discipline.

Eleven percent of the respondents indicated that their ISS program was patterned after a theoretical model, 37% noted that theirs was not, and 49% claimed that they did not know if their school's ISS program was patterned after a theoretical model.

Twenty percent of the participants noted that their ISS program was funded from an allocation in the school's budget, while 55% said that no funds were specifically allocated for ISS. In response to the question about ISS facilities, most participants reported that their facilities were located in the principal's or assistant/vice-principal's office, and 33% stated that the facilities were isolated from other classrooms but located in the same building.

Forty percent of the participants reported that their ISS room needed carrels, 37% indicated that their ISS facilities were adequate, 29% stated that they needed a larger room, and 14% said that the ISS room needed more books and computers. Additionally,

the majority of respondents indicated that the principal and assistant/vice-principal were involved in the implementation of the ISS program, while a few reported that parents were involved in its implementation. The majority also reported that no training in ISS was provided for the staff, while a few reported the provision of on-going in-service education in ISS.

When interviewees were questioned about the guidelines for assigning students to ISS their responses were mixed. Some said that they were clearly stated; others suggested that they were not formally established; and some indicated that guidelines were lacking.

The teacher-student conference was the most common intervention strategy used with students prior to their placement in ISS, while disruption in class, insubordination, and verbal abuse were the three most frequently reported misbehavior that resulted in students being referred to ISS. A vast majority of participants selected possession or use of an illegal substance, and possession or use of a weapon as behaviors that were deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS.

Most respondents indicated that the principal and assistant/vice-principals assigned students to ISS, and that the average length of referral was one day. The length of referral was based on the nature of the behavior in compliance with a predetermined scheduled.

The majority of respondents reported that one to four students per day were assigned to ISS, and a vast majority also said that there was no limit to the number of times a student could be assigned to ISS, per year. A written or verbal report on the student's recent behavior was submitted to the ISS teacher, and students who misbehaved repeatedly faced expulsion or an increase in the length of their referral to ISS. Forty-two percent of respondents noted that between one and five percent of the student population were assigned to ISS during the past academic year, and 31% reported that their school had no follow-up procedures for former ISS students. However, 28% of the respondents indicated that the guidance counselor occasionally talked to the students during the following weeks, and 28% noted that the principal, assistant/vice-principal or teachers monitored former suspendees' behavior, and routinely talked to them during the following weeks.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents claimed that their ISS program was evaluated annually, and this was the most frequently selected response. Some schools were undecided about the form the evaluation should take, while others observed that evaluation was informally conducted. However, most respondents indicated that their ISS program was moderately or very effective in serving as an alternative to OSS.

Thirty-one percent of the participants reported that since inception of the ISS program the number of ISS cases decreased moderately or greatly, while 26% indicated that they stayed the same. Respondents indicated that, in general, administrators and teachers supported the ISS program; parents preferred it to OSS, and students disliked it.

The main strength of the ISS program reported was its ability to remove the disruptive student from the regular classroom, while its reported main drawback was the lack of a specific ISS room. This said drawback was also listed, by 25% of the respondents, as the most important recommendation for improving the program.

Respondents indicated that, in some schools, teachers had the authority to assign students to ISS while in the others that was the prerogative of administrators. They reported that staff members and parents were usually informed of the referrals and that in some schools students were permitted to refer themselves to ISS.

All ISS students were required to work quietly on academic assignments. Some were also required to describe the incident, in writing, that resulted in their referral, and some were required to work on behavior packages. The main pieces of information collected as part of the ISS program were the reason for referral and the total number of students referred.

Forty-two percent of the respondents reported that ISS rules were reviewed with him/her at beginning of each day for the benefit of the assigned student. Fifty-four percent indicated that when students disobeyed ISS rules they received an OSS. It was also reported by 79% of the respondents that suspendees had to serve the specified time before they were "released" from ISS.

The majority of study respondents noted that ISS students had lunch in the ISS room, and that students were permitted to go to the restroom individually, unescorted. Regarding extra-curricular activities, 61% of the respondents indicated that ISS students were not allowed to participate. In addition, the majority of respondents noted that ISS

students were restricted from socializing and from sleeping in the ISS room.

About 25% of the respondents stated that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor, on a one-on-one basis, with some ISS students. Also reported was that administrators, teachers, curriculum/team leaders, behavior management staff, a family support worker, a school psychologist, and a Social Work student counseled ISS students.

ISS was viewed as being an informal program by some respondents because it lacked operational principles and rules, and because it was thought of by some staff members as merely a strategy to accomplish the removal of students from class. Interviewees also reported that ISS was a phase in the discipline process; teachers were expected to use classroom management techniques before resorting to ISS.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study are presented in Chapter 4, while the findings as they relate to the literature pertinent to ISS are discussed in this chapter. Specifically, the results of the study are examined under each of the headings suggested in Figure 2.1: Development and Implementation of ISS, Philosophy, Goals, Models, and Essential Elements, and the emergent themes that were not part of the framework conceptualized at the onset of the study.

Development and Implementation of ISS

Johnson (1991) noted that no matter who initiates an ISS program, if it is to be successful, the entire school staff must be committed to developing and implementing it. In this section the findings regarding research *questions one through four* are discussed below. Briefly, these research questions sought information with respect to: a) the reasons why ISS was developed and implemented, b) the persons who were involved in developing and implementing ISS programs, c) the extent to which ISS was utilized, and d) the length of time ISS has been in operation. The research questions were re-worded to form the headings for the various sections.

Rationale for Developing and Implementing ISS

Based on the findings of three case studies, which examined the evolution of three ISS programs in Virginia, Sullivan (1988) concluded that delineation of the reasons why ISS was a desired disciplinary option, was one of the twelve steps in planning and implementing an ISS program. It was touted by Corbett (1981), Weiss (1983), Johnston (1987), Bowdring (1988), and Oppenheimer and Ziegler (1990) that ISS programs were established as an alternative to OSS. In the current study "to provide an alternative to OSS" was the most frequently chosen reason by respondents for developing and implementing an ISS program. One of the findings regarding the planning of ISS, reported by Chobot and Garibaldi (1982), Sullivan (1988), and Johnson (1991), supports this contention.

The primary reason for developing and implementing ISS, in Johnson's (1991)

study, was to keep students in a supervised environment, while "to respond to students not being supervised because parents/guardians were not at home during the time students were suspended from school" ranked fourth. In the current study the former reason ranked fourth while the latter ranked seventh.

According to ten and one percent of the participants (see Table 4.1), respectively, the reasons for developing and implementing an ISS program grew out of the need to: a) "respond to students not being supervised because parents/guardians are not at home during the time students are suspended out-of-school," and b) "eliminate the problem of suspended students roaming the community and causing trouble." These findings reaffirmed the contentions of Nielsen (1979b) and DiSciullo (1984).

In the current study another reason, in general, for implementing an ISS program was based, in part, on the nature of the student body. Mentally challenged students and students who were diagnosed with behavior disorders were part of the student population. The Colorado Department of Education (1988; cited in Johnson, 1991) reported that school districts were permitted to use normal disciplinary procedures for handicapped students in cases of emergency. Wayson (1980, cited in Johnson, 1991) pointed out that if there was a relationship between the behavior and the handicapping condition, the handicapped student must be provided with an alternative setting in which he/she would receive the educational service. Johnson (1991) concluded that the ISS program could be used as the alternative. However, from a Canadian, legal perspective, the critical Charter section, according to MacKay and Sutherland (1992) regarding penalizing students for breach of school rules is section 12: "Everyone has the right not to be subjected to any cruel and unusual treatment or punishment." MacKay and Sutherland (1992) noted that whenever administrators or teachers impose a form of treatment or punishment on a student, they should consider whether the student can appreciate the nature of the discipline. The writers caution that "teachers in special education settings will have to pay particular attention to their handling of students because of the potential lack of appreciation by the individual student" (p. 64).

Participants in the Development and Implementation of ISS

Development. Sullivan (1988) recommended that school systems should seek

input from administrators, staff, and parents when contemplating an ISS program. The data in the current study indicated that principals, vice-principals, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students were involved, to some extent, in the development of ISS program. These finding were consistent with that of Johnson (1991). Moore (1989) reported that "ISS programs with counseling interventions tended to use counselors and parents in the planning stage" (p. 1855A). However, in the current study the greatest degree of participation in the development of ISS programs came from vice-principals and principals. This supports the findings of Matherson (1982), Foster and Kight (1988), and Johnson (1991).

Implementation. Respondents in the current study indicated that vice-principals, principals, and teachers were most frequently involved in the implementation of ISS programs. They reported that guidance counselors, parents, and students were involved infrequently. These findings substantiate that of Haupt (1987) and Sullivan (1988) who reported that faculty and administrators were involved in the implementation of the ISS programs. Haupt (1987) pointed out that "the assistant principal [was] responsible primarily for the administration of the ISS program, whereas a team of teachers [was] responsible primarily for the in-classroom daily operation of the program" (p. 266A). Anding (1984) reported that the ISS program in junior high schools in Omaha Public Schools "lacked community involvement in planning and implementation" (p. 3035A).

In the current study school administrators and teachers were most frequently involved in the planning and implementation of ISS programs, while fewer respondents reported the involvement of parents and students. I believe that school administrators should encourage students and parents to become more involved in the planning and implementation of ISS programs. Short, Short and Blanton (1994) expressed concern about the lack of parental involvement in ISS. Dreikurs, Grunwald and Pepper (1982), in addressing the issue of democracy in schools, noted that democracy comprises a climate of mutual respect, student participation "in establishing and maintaining any rules necessary for functioning in an orderly group" (p. 78), and the development of student self-discipline. I concur with Leatt (1987), Sullivan (1988), and Johnson (1991) who claimed that a wide spectrum of persons should be included in the planning and implementation of ISS programs. Leatt (1987) observed, "[When] staff, students,

counselors, parents, and members of the community are in involved [in the development and implementation of ISS programs] a sense of ownership will grow from their participation" (p. 18). The theorist further noted that "although this takes time it will be time well spent and will demonstrate the clear intentions of the program's designers to meet the needs of the students and the school" (p. 18).

Extent of the Utilization of ISS

In the current study approximately 25% of the schools contacted by telephone did not have an ISS program, while 35% of the respondents in Johnson's (1991) study reported that their school did not have an ISS program. The current study was undertaken a decade later and this may account for at least some of the differences. Respondents in the current study also reported that opposition to the program was mainly centered on the belief that ISS was not effective, that there was a lack of money to fund the program, that facilities were inadequate, and that non-ISS schools had insufficient staff to supervise ISS. The current findings confirm those reported by Johnson (1991). Additionally, Pemberton (1985), in his study of the effectiveness of ISS as perceived by high school principals, reported that: a) a majority of the ISS programs that were discontinued were discontinued because they were too expensive, and b) a majority of high school principals who did not use ISS would do so if additional funds were available. Again, as also revealed in the current study, lack of sufficient funds appears to be a serious issue constraining the adoption of ISS programs in some schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12.

The current investigation also disclosed that schools with a student population of 301 – 600 had the highest percentage of ISS programs, while schools with a student population of 901 – 1200 and 1201 – 1500 had the lowest percentages of ISS programs. These finding differed from those of Johnson (1991), who found that "schools with student populations between 100 and 699 had the highest percentage of ISS programs, [while] schools with student populations under 100 had the lowest percentages of ISS programs" (p. 92).

Length of Time ISS Has Been in Operation

The results of the current study indicate that the number of years ISS has been in operation in public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12, in three major cities in Alberta, ranged from less than a year to 30 years. Eleven percent of the respondents stated that their ISS program was over ten years old, 55% indicated that theirs was ten years old or less, and 32% did not respond to the item on the questionnaire or stated that they did not know how long ISS has been in operation in their school. According to Collins (1985a) and Sullivan (1989b), "ISS programs made their debut in the educational arena [in the United States] during the 1970s" (p. 409). Hudson (1980), in her study of ISS programs in secondary schools in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio, found that few ISS programs had been in existence for more than five years. Matherson (1982) reported that "most of the programs operating in the [reporting] schools [in the state of Texas] had been established for a period of two to five years" (p. 3474A). About 21 years after the inception of ISS programs, Johnson (1991) conducted a study of ISS programs in secondary schools in the state of Colorado. She claimed, "Of the schools reporting ISS programs, 67% had had programs for five years or less, and 31% had had them for six or more years" (p. 94). These findings seem to indicate that over the years there was an increase in the number of programs that were five years old or less.

No information regarding the first appearance of ISS programs in a Canadian setting was found in the literature. In the current study the data revealed that about eight percent of the respondents indicated that their ISS programs were 20 to 30 years old (see Table 4.6). That puts them as having their "debut" during the 1970s, too. My speculations concerning why 54% of the ISS programs in this study were ten years old or less are centered on: a) maybe some of the school buildings were newly constructed (less than 20 years old) to address the need for schools in an area that did not have a school before.), and b) maybe the lack of funds, facilities and staff to supervise the program impeded the adoption of ISS programs.

Philosophy

Sheets (1996) and Sullivan (1989a) suggested that in planning an ISS program it

is essential to develop a philosophy that is in harmony with the school and district overall educational philosophy. "The development of the philosophical statement should be a collective process involving staff, administration, and other parties. This statement will guide the development of the other components needed in an effective ISS program" (Sheets, 1996, p. 88).

Research *question 5* was aimed at identifying the philosophy on which the ISS program was based. The findings as they relate to the philosophy behind the ISS programs are discussed under the following headings: no philosophy, custodial/strict authority and freedom with control/healthy discipline.

No philosophy. Six (4%) of the respondents stated that they did not know the philosophy or there was no philosophy behind their ISS program. Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) found that written statements of program philosophy and goals were absent in the small school districts (districts with an average daily membership of 3,000 to 8,000 students) in their study. They went on to state that "one major dichotomy that resulted from this deficiency was confusion on the part of some people as to whether in-school alternative programs were preventative or simply reactive treatments for disciplinary infractions" (p. 329). Whitfield and Bulach (1996) claimed that "educational practices need to be supported by a clearly defined philosophical construct" (p. 3).

The reason for a few respondents claiming that they did not know the philosophy or there was no philosophy behind their school's ISS program in the current study could be attributed to many factors. For example, one factor maybe inadequate communication between school administrators and staff regarding the philosophy on which the school's ISS program was based.

Custodial/strict authority. Siskind et al. (1993) noted that isolation and stern discipline help maintain the punitive aspect of ISS. The current research revealed that the most frequently suggested responses (69%) to the item regarding philosophy fell in the custodial/strict authority category, and the main focus was on punishment. These finding were in keeping with those of Garrett (1981), Sullivan (1988), and Moore (1989). Specifically, Garrett (1981) found that ISS programs were usually "developed and operated as an additional form of punishment rather than as programs designed and operated to rehabilitate the misbehaving student" (p. 2097A). Sullivan (1988) reported

that in School Division A, although "the original pilot plan included efforts at behavior modification through counseling and values clarification exercises, the basic philosophical orientation was punitive" (pp. 37-38). In School Division B there was "a discrepancy between the written philosophy that [focused] on therapeutic alternatives to OSS and the use of ISS as a temporary controlling measure" (p. 80). Additionally, Short, Short, and Blanton (1994) pointed out that "teachers with different discipline philosophies also differ in their identification of problem behaviors and their choice of strategies to deal with them... The match between discipline philosophy and strategy may be crucial, at the school level" (p. 7). It was also reported in the current study that levels of tolerance for students' misbehavior varied among teachers and consequently students referral to ISS depended, partly, on the teacher's threshold for misbehavior.

Freedom with control/healthy discipline. In the current study, the comments made by 31% of the respondents regarding the philosophy behind the ISS program fell in the "freedom with control/healthy discipline" category, and the main focus was rehabilitation. The comments were as follows: to provide counseling, to provide academic help, to work one-on-one with students, and to help students develop problem-solving skills. These findings tend to corroborate some of the findings of Sullivan (1988) who reported that the basic philosophical orientation in School Division C was rehabilitative. She provided an example that a diagnostic teacher wrote an academic and behavioral plan for all students who had completed their stay in ISS, and the "plan was based on information gleaned from tutoring, counseling, and testing [those students]" (pp. 111, 112).

Goals

Research *question 6* sought information regarding the goals of the ISS program. Short, Short, and Blanton (1994) claimed that the goal of any alternative to OSS "should be to identify and remedy the problems and to help the students develop self-discipline" (p. 17). In the literature describing ISS, these writer found few articles that cited "goals and objectives for programs other than the obvious reduction of OSS" (p. 19). The goal of providing an alternative to OSS was numbered among the most frequently selected goals of ISS that was reported by Johnson (1991). In the current study the most

frequently suggested goals were to: provide an alternative to OSS, remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time, influence students through counseling to choose to behave appropriately, and help students develop self-discipline.

Models

The ISS literature states that ISS programs fall within three theoretical orientations – punitive, academic/theoretical, and therapeutic (Short, 1988b; Pare, 1983; Mendez and Sanders, 1981). Short, Short and Blanton (1994) pointed out that "programs can be organized around one specific orientation, or may combine two or more theoretical orientations" (p. 18). Through the use of *question 7* the researcher attempted to find out if ISS programs were patterned after a theoretical model. The findings to this question are discussed below.

When asked if their ISS program was patterned after a theoretical model, 19 (11%) respondents indicated that is was, 65 (37%) reported that it was not, and 86 (49%) checked the response "don't know" if it was based on a theoretical model. It seems that there was little certainty regarding the theoretical underpinning of the ISS programs. My speculation is that little or no research was done during the planning and implementing stages of the program or if it was, it apparently was not shared widely in the school. Sullivan (1989b) concluded that persons involved in planning and implementing the program should "exercise options available through a) review of the literature, b) observations in other school districts, and c) interviews with persons experienced in the implementation and administration of the program" (p. 409). Corbett (1981) emphasized, "Be sure there is an efficient system available to communicate routine information and to keep new participants and non-participants informed" (p. 62).

Eleven of the 19 participants who stated that ISS was patterned after a theoretical model seemed to suggest, in their explanation, that the program was essentially punitive. Additionally, five of the 19 participants checked "Yes" it was patterned after a theoretical model and provided no further explanation, and three others made one of the following comments: a) The former principal brought back the idea (ISS) from a conference, b) I read about it in a professional journal, and c) Our school is developing a discipline process which is based in part on the principal's Masters' Thesis. These essentially

punitive programs maybe categorized under "custodial/strict authority" philosophical orientation. Short and Noblit (1985), Moore (1989), and Siskind et al. (1993) reported that the programs they studied were essentially punitive. Moore (1989) stated that "the theory of ISS as a mean to help students develop self-discipline, make positive changes, and improve their attitudes towards school [was not] practiced by a majority of schools" (p. 1855A). Additionally, Whitfield (1996) reported, in his study, that questions aimed at the purposes of ISS programs fell into the three models. However, Whitfield (1996) added, "When discussing ISS as a punitive measure, the staff believed the opposite of students. Almost 70% disagreed with ISS as being a punitive measure, while 71% of the students believed it was punitive in nature" (p. 20). Leatt (1987) pointed out that "purely punitive programs that do not involve some sort of therapeutic component are deficient" (p. 21).

Essential Elements

According to the literature, the essential elements in an ISS program are funding, facilities, staff training, referral, follow-up, and evaluation. Research *questions 8* through *10*, and *13* and *14* sought information regarding these elements. The research findings associated with each of these components are discussed below.

Funding

Sullivan (1988) claimed that "securing adequate financial support is a crucial factor in the planning and implementation of an ISS program" (p. 183). She further stated that "the lack of consistent pecuniary resources also leads to insufficient funds for materials, equipment, and training needs. Consequently, planned strategies are never fully initiated" (p. 183).

Twenty-five percent of the participants in the current study provided no response or claimed that the item was not applicable, 20% noted that ISS programs were funded from an allocation in the school's budget, and 55% indicated that no funds were specifically allocated for ISS programs. Fourteen members (7.9%) of this group (the 55%) stated that: a) each staff member made the decision in a collaborative way, to give up one preparation period per seven-day cycle to supervise ISS, b) the supervision of ISS

was part of the duties of the administrative team, and c) ISS depended primarily on sending the student to another teacher's classroom. The findings in the current study corroborate that of Matherson (1982) who found that "no special funding was available for most programs, and personnel and supplies were utilized from the regular local school budget" (p. 3474A). Johnson (1991) found that the lack of money was one of the reasons for not having an ISS program.

In the current study, it appears that inadequate funding was a factor that had an impact on the implementation of ISS programs in public and separate schools with any of the grades 7 through 12, in three urban areas in Alberta. It also seems that the information regarding funding of ISS programs was not clearly and widely communicated to staff members. Bone (1982), in his study of Anniston City School System in the United States, concluded, "Survey data indicated that the ISS program should be well funded and strongly supported by the school system's central administration" (p. 1359A).

Facilities

DiSciullo (1984) and Patterson (1985) suggested that isolation of the disruptive student from the rest of the student population is a fundamental element in ISS programs. Specifically, DiSciullo (1984) states, "the room which houses the ISS program [should be] completely isolated from the regular instructional programs" (p. 329). The findings of Bone (1982) and Opuni et al. (1991) support this contention. Foster and Kight (1988) added that whether the ISS program "is located in a room or in a hallway is less important than the climate maintained in the room; the 'room' should function as a self-contained program with a non-disruptive, quite atmosphere" (p. 3).

The findings of the current study reveal that 48% of the respondents reported that the ISS program was housed in the principal's or assistant/vice-principal's office, 33% indicated that it was isolated from other classrooms but located in the same building; 13% claimed that the facilities were located in the midst of other classrooms; and five percent checked the "other" response category and suggested the following locations: a) a variety of locations; depending on the availability of room at the time b) the library; and c) the staff workroom. These findings were in keeping with those of Johnson (1991) and

Siskind et al. (1993) who reported that all middle and high school ISS programs in their study were located in an area separate from other classrooms.

In response to the question, "What would make your ISS facility more suitable?" 37% of the participants indicated that their facilities were adequate; 40% reported that their school needed carrels for the ISS room; 29% indicated that their school needed a larger ISS room; and 11% reported that the ISS room needed more books and computers. Additionally, about 27% of the respondents suggested the following requirements for the ISS programs in the "other" category: a) a specific ISS room, b) a specific ISS teacher, c) a room with more natural light and ventilation, d) a one-way mirror and camera to monitor the ISS room, e) an ISS room closer to the office and f) a means of corresponding with the teacher assigned to supervise the ISS room. Johnson (1991) claimed that 42% of the respondents in her study listed the need for a better facility, while 28% suggested the need for a full-time staff. This latter need is common to both studies. According to Opuni et al. (1991), the need for a larger room and study carrels was among the recommendations for addressing the weaknesses in ISS programs in the Houston Independent School District. The need for a telephone for the ISS room was also reported by Opuni et al. (1991), and The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986). Additionally, Siskind et al. (1993) reported that two of the eight high schools in their study "had no communication device in the ISS room. All [eight] middle schools had such a device. Only one middle school had a phone in the classroom" (p. 4). The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction (1986) concluded that all ISS facilities should meet the "requirements for a regular classroom in regard to size, space and materials particularly because of the self-contained nature of the program" (p. 2).

Staff Training

Corbett (1981) expressed the view that "training of both participants and non-participants (teachers and parents) in the [ISS] program is necessary" (p. 60). Sullivan (1988), lending support, claimed that "a lack of formal, system wide training among ISS personnel often results in a lack of uniform operating and data gathering procedures" (p. 185).

The majority of participants (61%) in the current study indicated that no training

was provided for ISS staff, while 15% said that on-going in-service ISS workshops were provided. These findings of sporadic in-service workshops were in keeping with those of Sullivan (1988). Specifically, Sullivan (1988) reported that, in School Division A, the first two ISS coordinators received no formal training. However, "since 1976 all coordinators have attended an in-service workshop at the beginning of the school year" (p. 46). In School Division B, no in-serviced workshop or formal training session was conducted, and in School Division C "the only instance in which a formal training session was conducted for ISS teachers was at the beginning of the 1986 - '87 school year when three new diagnostic teachers were hired" (p. 116).

Foster and Kight's (1988) findings were the converse of the findings of the current study. They stated that "in 78% of the schools surveyed, some type of in-service training [was] provided for all ISS personnel. The remaining 22% indicated that no such in-service training program was currently being provided" (p. 14).

Referral

In this section the findings regarding research *question 10* are discussed in the following sub-sections: a) guidelines for assigning students to ISS and communication of the guidelines b) strategies employed prior to referral, c) misbehaviors that result in referral to ISS, d) misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS, e) persons who assigned students to ISS; and duration of the referral, f) determination of the length of the referral, g) the number of students assigned to ISS per day, h) the number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS, i) the information on the referred student that is forwarded to the ISS teacher, and j) the percentage of students that was assigned to ISS during the previous academic year.

Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) pointed out that "the smooth functioning of the referral process is crucial to the success of an ISS program" (p. 324). The writers explain authors that "such a system provides a control that keeps the program from being used inappropriately as a 'dumping ground' and assures that the services offered reach those who would benefit most from them" (p. 324).

Guidelines for assigning students to ISS and communication of the guidelines. In the current study the majority (74%) of respondents to the item regarding

how the length of the referral to ISS was determined indicated that administrators determined the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior, in compliance with a predetermined schedule, 30% reported that the principal or vice-principal determined the number of days on an ad hoc basis, and 24% checked the "other" response category and suggested the following: a) students were assigned to ISS by their teacher for a period or a block (two periods); b) the principal or vice-principal considers input from teachers, the guidance counselor, the student, and sometimes parents or guardians when determining the length of referral to ISS; c) the team leader determines the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior; and d) when the goals of the students Individual Program Plan are attained. Interviewees' responses regarding guidelines for assigning students to ISS were also mixed. Four interviewees stated that their school's guidelines were clearly stated; three hesitated to say "clearly stated" because they felt that each student and situation had to be considered, and sometimes that resulted in guidelines being waived; three indicated that the guidelines were not clearly established; and one noted that guidelines for referring students to ISS were lacking.

Sullivan (1988) in discussing the findings regarding guidelines for referral to ISS noted that "no formal guidelines now exist (as they did in the original proposal of School Divisions B and C) that designate certain consequences for specific acts of misbehavior" (p. 169). Additionally, the majority of administrators in School Divisions A, B, and C felt that "the lack of specific guidelines allows them the flexibility to determine the seriousness of the offense and, therefore the amount of time the student will be assigned to ISS" (p. 49).

Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) also reported the absence of written guidelines or procedures. Specifically, in large school districts – districts with 55,000 to 600,000 students,

> the formality of the referral process tended to be more dependent on the principal's style than on any written guidelines or procedures .... Perhaps the best referral system was in a junior high school where a referral committee met each week to make assignments to, and to consider release of students from the program. The principal question asked was, 'Can the student benefit from the program?' (p. 324)

In small districts – districts with 3,000 to 8,000 students – assignments to the Stop-off Room (another label for ISS) "was not defined in program guidelines" (p. 332).

Whitfield and Bulach (1996) believe that the ISS referral process is a vital form of communication. Corbett (1981) and Sullivan (1988) claimed that communication of clearly defined policies, goals and details of ISS is significant for the success of the program. Students may be informed of ISS, at the onset of the school year, through the students' handbook. PTA meetings, telephone calls, and written materials might be used to acquaint parents and other members of the community with ISS.

Regarding communicating of the ISS referral procedures, in the current study one interviewee claimed that it was not well communicated to parents and students. ISS referral procedures were explained to the student when he/she was being assigned to ISS, and following that parents were contacted by telephone. On the other hand four interviewees reported that procedures for assigning students to ISS were well communicated to students, parents, and staff members. The remaining six interviewees, speaking about school rules, pointed out that parents and students were informed about them through newsletters, the students' handbook, and at parent-teacher meetings. Staff members were made privy to their school's discipline policy at staff meetings, and through the staff handbook.

The results of the current investigation support, in part, the findings of Foster and Kight (1988). They claimed that in the majority (77%) of secondary schools "students [were] first told about the ISS program when they [were] actually suspended. In a few situations, at the beginning of the school year, students [were] informed about ISS through an orientation or assembly program, a handbook, or letter" (p. 25).

Strategies employed prior to referral. A majority of respondents indicated that teacher-student conferences, telephone calls to parent(s) or guardian(s), referrals to the principal's or assistant/vice-principal's office, lunch-time or after-school detentions, and teacher-parent(s) or guardian(s) conference were typically used with students prior to their placement in ISS. These findings are in keeping with those of Johnson (1991).

Misbehaviors that result in referral to ISS. Dreikurs, Grunwall, and Pepper (1982), and Albert (1996) contend that students choose their behavior, and according to Hochman and Werner (1987) "student misbehavior reflects poor decision making."(p.

93). Canter and Canter (1992) stated that "students need to know what is expected of them. They need to know what will occur if they choose not to comply with those expectations" (p. 12). In the current study, misbehaviors reported by a majority of respondents, that resulted in students' placement in ISS included: disruption in class, insubordination, verbal abuse, fighting, skipping class, and failure to do homework. These results reinforce the findings of Angiolillo (1986), Foster and Kight (1988), Sullivan (1988), Opuni et al. (1991) and Johnson (1991). Additionally, the three most frequently selected misbehaviors selected by 50%, 28%, and 23% of the respondents in this investigation that resulted in students' referral to ISS were disruption in class, insubordination, and verbal abuse, respectively. However "disruption in class" was the only misbehavior numbered among the top three misbehaviors that was common to the afore-mentioned five research studies.

Misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS. Possession or use of illegal substances and possession or use of a weapon were the top two misbehaviors that were deemed too severe, by a majority of respondents in the current study, to be dealt with through ISS. These findings were in keeping with those of Foster and Kight (1988) and of Sullivan (1988). Foster and Kight (1988) noted that most of the participants in their study "felt that some offences were too serious to be handled through an ISS program. The two most notable exceptions were Junior Highs and BOCES schools, where school personnel were less likely to regard any offence too serious for ISS" (p. 23). These researchers further reported that the most common "offenses which school officials regarded as too severe to be dealt with by ISS involved drugs and alcohol, [and] the second most commonly listed offense was fighting" (p. 23). Sullivan (1988) stated that in School Division B, "Generally, fighting, profanity, and involvement with drugs still warranted OSS or expulsion" (p. 87).

Persons who assigned students to ISS, and duration of the referral. Ferrone and Piraino (1990), in describing their ISS program, stated that "the principal and vice-principal [were] solely responsible for the referral of students to the program" (p. 15). Sullivan (1988) went a step further and suggested that when "possible, allow all referrals to be decided by the same administrator" (p. 193).

In the current research, 81% of the respondents reported that the principal and

assistant/vice-principal assigned students to ISS. (It should be noted that participants were asked to check all of the alternative responses to the item that was germane to their school's ISS program; as a result the percentages do not equal 100%). This corroborates the finding of Sullivan (1988), Johnston (1987), and Chobot and Garibaldi (1982). In contrast, Siskind et al. (1993) noted that in their study "at both the middle and high school levels, referrals came primarily from teachers and principals" (pp. 3-4).

Forty percent of the participants in the current study indicated that teachers were permitted to assign students to ISS. This finding differs from that of Chobot and Garibaldi (1982). They found that in the large school districts "direct teacher referrals [to ISS] were not permitted" (p. 324). However, Siskind et al. (1993) reported that in two of the eight middle schools in their study teachers had the authority to refer students to ISS.

Fourteen and seven percent of the respondents reported that guidance counselors and parents, respectively, participated in assigning students to ISS. Additionally, four percent checked the "other" category and suggested that behavior management specialists, students themselves, lunchroom supervisors, and teacher's assistants assigned students to ISS. Siskind et al. (1993) found that "in no case did parents make a referral, and in only one middle school did guidance counselors refer" (p. 4). Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) claimed that in the large districts "parental involvement in assignment [of students to ISS] was usually limited to a letter of notification or personal conference prior to or at the completion of assignment" (p. 324), while in the small districts "parental involvement was not very different from the minimal, reactive role found in large districts" (p. 332). Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) and Sullivan (1988) also spoke of students being permitted to refer themselves to ISS. In the current study four interviewees spoke of student self-referral to ISS, and such referral was based on "having a bad day" and/or "the need to catch-up on assignment." Participants claimed that permission was usually granted if the administrator or teacher thought that the student was not going to miss an important class, or if the ISS room was not full on that particular day. Sullivan (1988) reported that "generally [a self-referral] request involves the desire of a previously suspended student to receive additional tutoring from the ISS teacher or aide" (p. 122).

About 50% of the participants in this research indicated that the average length of

referral to ISS was one day, while 26% reported that it was part of a day. Two, three, four, and five consecutive days were suggested by 13%, 5%, 1%, and 2% of the respondents, respectively. About four percent said one class period, sometimes several weeks with gradual return to class, and that it depended on the behavior and response plan. One-day referral to ISS was also suggested by the majority (61%) of participants in Johnson's (1991) study, and by all respondents in Siskind et al's. (1993). The findings regarding the length of referral to ISS also varied among researchers: Siskind et al. (1993), Johnston (1987), Sullivan (1988), Johnson (1991), and Chabot and Garibaldi (1982). Specifically, Sullivan (1988) and Siskind et al. (1993) reported that the maximum number of days spent in ISS ranged from one to five. The former researcher noted that such was the case in School Division C, while the latter stated that three and five days were the most popular maximal length of referral in their study. Furthermore, Sullivan (1988) indicated that "while the minimum assignment designated in the original ISS program in School Division A was one full day, and three days in School Division B, students in both programs are now referred to ISS for one class period" (p. 169). Additionally, "the original proposal in School Division B designated five days as the maximum penalty. Maximum length of referral now ranges from an upper limit of ten days at two schools to only one day at one senior high" (p. 169). Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) claimed that "in two of the four large districts assignments to ISS could be as long as a semester" (p. 325), while in the small districts "the average was just over three days in all full-time sites, with a range of 1 to 10 days" (p. 333). Johnston (1987) stated that "first-time offenders were assigned to ISS for three days" (p. 123).

In the current study, 50% of the participants reported that students were assigned to ISS for a day, 26% indicated that students were assigned to ISS for part of a day, and 13% or less claimed that referrals were for two days or longer. In the literature there is a lack of agreement among researchers and theorists regarding the length of time students should be assigned to the ISS program. Neilsen (1979a) and Chabot and Garibaldi (1982), in their description of ISS programs, reported that students were assigned to ISS for one to ten days. Stessman (1984) reported that students were assigned to ISS for three to ten days, and Johnston (1987) reported that first time offenders were assigned to ISS for three days, while repeaters were assigned to ISS for or five days. Sullivan (1988)

recommended that school officials should avoid using "ISS as a temporary controlling measure, [and they should] make no referrals for less than one full day" (p. 193). According to Johnson (1991), assigning students to ISS "for just one day [raises] the issue of adequate time to address causes and to make a difference with the students" (p. 174). Weiss (1983) stated that in her school students were assigned an ISS "for a minimum of two days, [and that] amount of time [allowed] the ISS supervisor to work with the students on both academic and behavioral problems" (p. 132). In the current study, it seems that ISS was used as a temporary controlling measure, and according to Garibaldi (1979), as another strategy of "pushing students out of the regular classroom" (p. 101).

The number of students assigned to ISS per day. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents in the current study indicated that one to four students per day, the first of seven options to choose from, were assigned to ISS. These numbers were close to those reported by Sullivan (1988), for School Divisions A and C. In Division A, there was "an upper limit of 12 to 20 students, [and] an average of five referrals per day" (p.50). In school Division C "the average number of students assigned to ISS each day was estimated to be three to five" (p. 123). Johnson (1991) stated that "nearly three-fourths of the respondents reported assigning from one to three students to ISS at one time" (p. 111).

Eleven percent of the respondents in the current study chose the second of seven options that from five to eight students were assigned to ISS daily. Sullivan (1988) claimed that in Division B "the most frequently mentioned overload point for ISS was 15 students, [and] the average number of students in ISS each day [was] anywhere from 6 to 12" (p. 88). Johnson (1991) claimed that "one-fourth of the respondents reported assigning four to six students" (p. 112). Johnston (1987) spoke of a room that can house a maximum of seven students, while Ferrone and Piraino (1990) mentioned a room that can house twelve students.

About two percent of the participants chose the third, fourth, and fifth options indicating that from 9 to 12, 13 to 16, and 17 to 20 students, respectively, were assigned to ISS per day. Additionally, one respondent in the current study chose the sixth of the seven options, indicating that from 21 to 24 students were assigned to ISS on a daily

basis. Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) stated that "as a rule most programs [in both large and small districts] could accommodate no more than 20 students at any one time" (p. 34). Opuni et al. (1991) observed that the average "daily enrollment figures for [four of 19 ISS programs] ranged between 25 and 34 students. The [ISS] handbook specified a ratio of 1:20, [and] six of the 19 [programs] had mean daily enrollments in excess of [ISS] guidelines" (p. 3). The researchers concluded that some classes "were too large for one teacher to provide adequate one-on-one or small group tutoring" (p. 4).

In general, in the current study, assigning of one to four students per day to ISS appears to be manageable. However, housing of one to four students per day in the ISS programs seems to become an issue when one considers that 48% of the participants reported that ISS programs were held in the principal's or vice-principal's office, and 33% indicated that it was housed in a classroom isolated from other classroom. Sullivan (1988) recommended that a decision should be made beforehand regarding "the maximum number of students that the ISS facility can suitably accommodate and the ISS teacher can effectively supervise. [In addition, alternatives should be employed] whenever the maximum student load is reached" (p. 194).

The number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS. A majority of respondents (88%) to the questionnaire item in the current study indicated that no limit was placed on the number of times a student could be assigned to ISS, while 4.3% indicated twice a year, 3.5% suggested three times a year, 2.4% claimed that it depended on the incident, after five referrals an administrator met with parents and students, 1.2% reported that after seven referrals OSS was implemented, and 0.6% indicated that after 10 referrals to ISS, OSS or other disciplinary measures were adopted. c) seven ISS referrals then OSS, and d) ten ISS referrals then OSS.

Johnston (1987) reported that students were assigned to ISS to a maximum of two times a year and "beyond that, other measures [were] used to deal with disciplinary problems" (p. 123). Siskind et al. (1993) said that six of the eight schools "limited the number of times a student could visit ISS in a year, and two limited the number of days" (p. 4). Additionally, two of the eight middle schools "limited the number of visits to ISS during the school year but none limited the number of days" (p. 4).

Regarding students who misbehaved repeatedly, interviewees in the current study

reported that: a) the length of referral to ISS in their school had been increased, however, not beyond three days, b) they were given an OSS, c) they were asked to withdraw from school, or d) they were expelled.

Weiss (1983), Dorrell and Katcher (1984), and Sullivan (1988) all wrote of an escalation in the length of referral to ISS. Dorrell and Katcher (1984) indicated that "students who violated any of the rules of the ISS program [were] assigned additional day(s) in the program" (p. 123). Sullivan (1988) claimed that in School Division A there was "an unwritten rule that ISS is a one-day assignment for first-time offenders, two days for the second-time, and three days for third-time offenders" (p. 49). Based on the information provided by respondents in the present study, the vast majority of schools with any of the grades 7 through 12, in three cities in Alberta, had no such limitation.

Heitzman (1984; cited in Opuni et al., 1991) stated that planners of school discipline should ensure that "the adverse consequence being administered (punishment) is really punishment for the pupil" (p. 25). Opuni et al. (1991) explained that "if teachers perceived that repeat referrals liked [ISS] and no longer found their referral to [ISS] as a punishment, then it is essential that alternative strategies are adopted to effectively address the situation" (p. 25). Sullivan (1988) concluded that school personnel should "limit the number of days per year that may be assigned to a student (five is [the] generally recommended) [maximum], and the number of times a student may be referred to ISS during one academic term" (p. 194).

Information on the referred student provided to the ISS teacher. In the current study 63% of the participants indicated that the teacher wrote up or presented a verbal report on the student's recent behavior, while 33% selected the alternative "the ISS teacher has access to the student's file." About nine percent of the respondents indicated that no information on the referred student was forwarded to the ISS teacher, 6% suggested that the administrator and teacher discussed background information, the problem, previous intervention strategies, and the reason for assigning the student to ISS, and two percent indicated that ISS was normally held in another teacher's classroom and the teacher would likely have know the reason for referral and the assignment the student had to work on. The literature indicated that information on the referred student was sought, but the method for procuring such was different. Ferrone and Piraino (1990)

reported in their study that the ISS teacher started a file, which contained "information pertaining to the reason for referral" (p. 16), on the student.

Percentage of students assigned to ISS during the previous academic year. Thirty-four percent of the participants did not respond to the item regarding the percentage of students assigned to ISS during the past academic year. Of the 116 providing a response to this item about 64% indicated that 1% to 5% of the student population were assigned to ISS during the past academic year. This corroborates Johnson's (1991) findings. Specifically, Johnson (1991) reported in her study "a majority of the respondents (63%) reported that five percent or fewer of their student populations was involved in their ISS programs during the [previous] school year" (p. 134). Additionally, in the current study, about 23%, 12% and one percent of the participants who responded to the item claimed that 6% to 10%, 11% to 15% and 20% to 35% of the students, respectively, were assigned to ISS during the previous academic year.

Follow-up Procedures

Part of research *question 9* was centered on follow-up procedures with students who had been in the ISS program. In this section the findings regarding this research question are discussed below.

Leatt (1987) stated that "since the goal of the [ISS] program was to help the student get back on track and make significant behavioral changes, it is important to determine whether this was accomplished" (p. 16). The writer stressed that "some sort of follow-up process should be implemented after the student leaves the ISS program and returns to the regular classroom. Close liaison among the administrators, the staff involved with the ISS room, and the student's teacher is necessary" (pp. 15, 16).

Thirty-one percent of the respondents in the current study reported that their school had no follow-up procedures, 28% indicated that the guidance counselor occasionally talked to the student during the following weeks, and six percent reported that the guidance counselor routinely talked to the students during the following weeks. Additionally, 39% of the respondents selected "other" and stated that: a) the principal, assistant/vice-principal or teacher routinely talked to the former suspendee during the following weeks to find out how he/she was doing; 18.5%, b) the student is supposed to

meet with the referring teacher on the same day, after school, to discuss and seek closure to the issue; 8.1%, c) an administrator talks to the student, makes sure that the necessary forms are signed and all assignments are completed before the student is allowed to return to his/her regular class; 4.6%, d) behavior management staff, or family support worker tries to influence the students to modify their behavior; 3.5%, e) a telephone call is made to parents on the day of the referral so that parents can discuss the issue with their child when he/she gets home; 2.3%, and f) the school administrator meets with the referring teacher at a later date "to see" how things are going; 2.3%.

In the current study about 73% of the respondents reported that that their schools had follow-up procedures for former ISS students. (Note the percentages do not equal 100% because respondents selected more than one response to the item). These findings differ somewhat from those of Johnson (1991) and Sullivan (1988), and greatly from those of Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) who reported that formal student follow-up appeared to be non-existent in both large and small districts in their study. Johnson (1991) claimed, "53% [of the participants] reported having follow-up procedures with students who had been in ISS, [while] 47% reported having no follow-up procedures" (pp. 114 – 115).

The data in Sullivan's (1988) study indicated that follow-up procedures not only varied among School Divisions A, B, and C, but also within Divisions A and B, themselves. Specifically, during the initial stages of the ISS program in School Division A "the ISS coordinator talked with the students and their teachers several times in the two weeks following the suspension" (p. 174). Sullivan (1988) reports that currently, most coordinators believe that "too many students [were] assigned to ISS [and as a result] follow-up procedures are not routinely conducted" (pp. 174 – 175). Additionally, administrators at two schools reported that no follow-ups were conducted "on students returning to regular classes after a stay in ISS" (p. 175). In School Division C "over the years since ISS implementation, students have been monitored for a specified period of time, and a written record of these observations has consistently been maintained in the student's file" (p. 175). These school-to-school differences certainly characterized the findings on ISS follow-up procedures in the current study.

Evaluation

Sheets (1996) reported that "the effective ISS model must have an evaluative phase. Too many times this factor of a successful program is ignored" (p. 89). Short (1988a) noted that "the evaluation process should be on-going. It is also important that the evaluation process include end of year assessments" (p. 29). In the current study part of research *question 9*, and research *questions 13* and *14* are focused on the evaluation of ISS programs. In this section the discussion of the findings regarding the evaluation of ISS programs are presented under the following headings: frequency of evaluation, nature of the evaluation, effectiveness of ISS programs, perceived opinions of others regarding ISS, attitude about ISS, strengths of ISS, weaknesses of ISS, and suggestions for improving ISS.

Frequency of evaluation. Of the 176 participants in the survey, 31% did not provide a response regarding the frequency of evaluation of the ISS program, or indicated that they did not know if their school's ISS was evaluated. Twenty percent of the participants indicated that their ISS program was not evaluated, while 36% reported that their ISS program was evaluated annually, and this turned out to be the most frequently provided response. Additionally, a total of 23 respondents (13%) suggested that their ISS program was evaluated on: a) an on-going basis, b) daily, c) weekly, d) monthly, e) semi-annually, f) every couple years, and g) every five years. The findings in the current study were similar to that of Siskind et al. (1993); these researchers stated that the Berkeley County ISS programs were irregularly evaluated. Furthermore, the findings in the current study differed from that of Sullivan (1988). Specifically, Sullivan (1988) reported that in School Division A, formal evaluations were conducted during each of the first two years of the program, after that "formal evaluation procedures were discontinued" (p. 67). In School Division B, ISS was evaluated at the end of the first year. Currently, "at two schools there was no established plan for assessing the effectiveness of the ISS program" (p. 178). Finally, in School Division C "data collected yearly on the major objectives were aggregated and reviewed at the end of the fifth consecutive year to formally evaluate the effectiveness of the program" (p. 179). The researcher concluded that in the current study there was a great variety of evaluation frequencies from none to on an ongoing basis.

Nature of the evaluation. One interviewee in the current research said that her school's ISS program was in its first year of operation and no decision was made regarding its evaluation. However, nine of the remaining interviewees reported that their school's ISS program was informally evaluated. Comments that were viewed as an informal evaluation of the program included:

- Students and parents have the opportunity to comment on the running of the school, and if there were any major concerns about ISS they would have mentioned it. [Researcher's note: Since ISS typically affected between one and five percent of students, the potential population of students and parents specific to ISS rather than the school as a whole would be small.]
- A student was good for three or four consecutive days after returning to class from ISS.

Furthermore, another interviewee stated that ISS was informally evaluated during staff meetings through questions such as: "Are you okay with what we are doing? What can we do differently?" Informal evaluation was also described in terms of the number of students referred to ISS, especially repeat referrals, during the semester. (Fewer referrals denoted an effective ISS program). Additionally, informal evaluation was perceived in terms of interest generated by new or old staff members in ISS at staff meetings. If staff members showed great interest in ISS, the program was perceived to be worthwhile and was continued.

The present study's finding that quite often ISS, in three cities in Alberta, was evaluated in an informal manner was in keeping with the finding of Sullivan (1988), in School Division B, and with that of Chobot and Garibaldi (1982). The latter stated that "most of the districts visited were able to say little of their program beyond the fact that they 'felt that discipline [had] improved as a result of the existence of ISS'" (pp. 326 – 327). Johnson (1991) claimed that "a majority of the respondents indicated that they evaluated their [ISS] program, [but] the nature and extensiveness of the program evaluation was not elicited" (p. 115).

Effectiveness of ISS programs. Most respondents reported that their ISS program was very effective or moderately effective in: removing the problem student from the classroom for a specified time; providing an alternative to OSS; monitoring

students' behavior during ISS; serving as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior; reducing the number of discipline problems; influencing students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately; providing a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent; reducing truancy; helping students develop problem-solving skills; reducing students' feeling of alienation from school; helping students develop self-discipline; monitoring students' behavior after they leave ISS; helping students improve their study habits; reducing chronic tardiness; and helping students improve their self-image. Additionally, one of the eleven interviewees claimed that ISS was effective when used as a tool to help students get caught-up on assignments.

These findings substantiate, in part, the findings of Johnson (1991), Haupt (1987), and Crew (1984), but were not in keeping with those of Garrett (1981) and Sampson (1985). Specifically, Garrett (1981) found that "there was less certainty about whether or not ISS programs have brought about any great degree of improved student behavior" (p. 2097A). Forty-six percent of the respondents in his study of ISS programs in southern Illinois high schools "either had no reaction or disagreed that ISS had improved student behavior" (p. 2097A). Sampson (1985) reported, in her study of the North Babylon ISS program, that "the data indicated that the program had a significant impact upon improving the behavior of the average student and little effect upon the hardcore student" (p. 2654A).

The finding, in the current study, that ISS is effective when used as a tool to help students get caught-up on assignments was in keeping with Sullivan's (1988). Some of the referred students in her study viewed ISS "as an opportunity to complete regular class assignments, and to receive intensive academic and behavioral assistance during the school day" (p. 152).

In the current investigation respondents indicated that ISS was effective in reducing the number of discipline problems and in serving as an alternative to OSS. This reinforces the findings of Johnson (1991), Haupt (1987), and Crews (1984).

A few respondents indicated that their ISS programs was mildly effective in: a) assessing students' progress in academic skills; b) diagnosing students' learning difficulties; c) focusing on instruction in the basic skills and d) fashioning activities in home and school survival training for students. In addition some interviewees stated that

ISS created problems and concerns. One example provided was that students who refused to resolve the behavior issue with the referring teacher resorted to skipping classes. Also, one of the teachers questioned whether ISS addressed the reason for students' referrals. These ideas were supported by Johnson (1991) who found that ISS was least effective in reducing the student's feeling of alienation from school. The finding in the current study that ISS programs created problems supports the arguments of Short (1988a), and Cooney et al. (1981).

Participants' ratings of effectiveness of their ISS programs in achieving the goals of the ISS program were analyzed in conjunction with school size. The findings in the current study indicated that ISS programs were moderately effective or very effective in achieving ten goals that were common to the four school-size categories. The ten goals were as follows: "to provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent;" "to influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately;" "to help students develop problem-solving skills;" "to provide an alternative to OSS;" "to reduce truancy;" "to remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time;" "to help students improve their self-image;" "to monitor students behavior during ISS;" "to reduce chronic tardiness;" and "to serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior." These findings differ from those of Johnson (1991) in terms of the goals themselves and/or the degree of effectiveness. Explicitly, in the Johnson (1991) research the "means for all of the school-size groups ranged between 2 – Not Effective and 3 – Somewhat Effective" (p. 131) for the items reducing truancy and reducing chronic tardiness. Additionally, "the means of the six school size categories on the variable 'reducing chronic tardiness' tended to be ordered according to size, with the smaller schools attaining smaller means and the larger schools attaining larger means" (p. 131).

The current investigation revealed that there was little certainty regarding the status of ISS cases; whether they had increased, had stayed the same, or had decreased since the program began. With reference to the recidivism rate of ISS the majority of participants (58%) indicated that the rate had decreased moderately or greatly since the program began. These findings differ from those of Clark (1980), Opuni et al. (1991), Knes (1995), Matusiak (1993) and Johnson (1991). Specifically, Clark (1980) reported that in the two public secondary high schools in his study "recidivism for discretionary

offences remained high for students assigned to Supervised Discipline Centers as well as suspended students" (p. 1400A). Opuni et al. (1991) noted that "overall, 51.5% of the students were referred to [ISS] only once during the 1990-91 school year. However, a substantial proportion (26%) of the students were referred to [ISS] for three or more times during the school year" (p. 7). Additionally, Johnson (1991) claimed that "respondents reported the largest increases in the number of ISS cases, [and that was] expected since this was a 'new' program" (p. 133). On the other hand, Matusiak (1993) observed that "three of the six high schools [in his study] had a significant number of repeat referrals to their ISS program" (p. 26A). Knes (1995) found that "the type of ISS program – [therapeutic or punitive] – did not seem to have an impact on recidivism" (p. 2061A).

A little more than half of the respondents (53%) in the current study reported that the number of OSS cases had decreased moderately or greatly. The finding that the number of OSS cases had decreased since ISS began operation in schools with any of the grades 7 through 12 in three cities in Alberta was in keeping with the findings of Clark (1980) and Johnson (1991). However, Lynch (1983) claimed that her data "indicated that there was no decrease in [OSS] after ISS was initiated at Bernal Intermediate School" (p. 465A). Regarding the recidivism rate of OSS, in the current study 66% of the respondents indicated that the rate had decreased moderately or greatly. This finding was not in keeping with Lynch's (1983), who reported that "OSS students showed higher rates of absenteeism and recidivism" (p. 465A).

Perceived opinions of others regarding ISS. Interviewees were asked to state what they thought the opinions of administrators, teachers, parents, and students were regarding ISS.

Administrators. Ten of the eleven interviewees claimed that generally administrators supported ISS, while two interviewees reported that some administrators preferred OSS. These findings lend support to those of Sullivan (1988), of Anding (1984), and of Farrone (1990), in part, who reported that administrators consistently viewed ISS in a positive manner.

Teachers. Nine of the eleven interviewees stated that teachers liked ISS, while two indicated that teachers held varying views. One interviewee suggested that teachers

who taught academic courses did not find it necessary to refer students to ISS while Shop and Physical Education teachers did. The finding that the majority of teachers were favorably disposed to ISS corroborates the findings of Hochman (1985), of Bowdring (1988), and of Sullivan (1988).

Parents. The current study revealed that eight of the eleven interviewees were of the opinion that the vast majority of parents were satisfied with the ISS programs. This finding reinforces the findings of Bowdring (1988), of Sullivan (1988), and of Shuman (1994).

Students. Overall, the opinions of interviewees regarding students' perceptions of ISS were mixed. Seven interviewees believed that students mostly perceived ISS as punishment and they did not like having to spend time in ISS. Additionally, two participants stated that if students were permitted to choose, they would choose ISS over OSS mainly because their parents would be very unhappy if they were given an OSS. Furthermore, three other interviewees suggested that some students liked ISS more than their regular classroom because: a) they got more work done in ISS than in their classroom, b) there were no disruptions as in the regular classroom, and c) they liked the one-on-one they received in ISS. A few students also requested referral to ISS; it was a sanctuary. On the contrary, two interviewees reported that, for the most part, a few students preferred OSS. These findings were in keeping with those of Sullivan (1988). The finding that some students preferred being assigned to OSS instead of ISS corroborates one of the findings of Whitfield and Bulach (1996).

Attitude about ISS. A large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements: a) guidance counselor(s) in our school support the ISS program; b) teachers in our school support the ISS program; c) parents of students at our school are in favor of the ISS program; d) the ISS program protects the rights of students to learn; e) it is better for students to be in ISS rather than suspended at home; f) isolation from peers as occurs in ISS is an effective strategy to deter misbehavior; g) the ISS program is effective in acting as a deterrent to misbehavior; h) the ISS program is effective in improving classroom behavior when students return from ISS; and i) the program is effective in keeping students up-to-date with their regular schoolwork. These findings substantiate the findings of Johnson (1991).

In the present study a majority of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements: a) the stay in ISS is too short for much positive student behavior change to occur; b) too many students are assigned to ISS on any one day; c) ISS is over-used as a disciplinary strategy in our school; d) ISS provides an opportunity for positive intervention with the student; and e) the ISS program makes students aware that they are responsible for their actions. The first three findings (a, b, and c) in the present study are somewhat in keeping with those of Johnson (1991) who reported that respondents in her study slightly disagreed or disagreed with these statements. The researcher also found that the last two findings (d and e) in the current study differed from those of Johnson (1991) who reported that a majority of respondents in her study slightly agreed or agreed with the statements. Additionally, in the present study the researcher concluded that respondents are undecided about the items "The ISS program has a good reputation with students" and "Preparing lessons for students in ISS is an added burden for teachers." These findings differed from those of Johnson (1991) and of Sullivan (1988). Johnson (1991) reported that the majority of respondents in her study slightly agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with these items. Sullivan (1988) stated that in her study teachers in School Divisions A and C indicated that they were "willing to take the extra time required to write up assignments" (p. 151).

Strengths of ISS. The three main strengths of ISS that were listed most frequently by respondents were: its ability to remove the disruptive student from the regular classroom, its tendency to serve as a deterrent, and its ability to have students do their homework and get caught-up on assignments. These findings lend support to those of Opuni et al. (1991) and of Sullivan (1988). However, Opuni et al. (1991) also pointed out that a majority of teachers believed that "certain students never want to achieve nor attend class, and [ISS] is not a deterrent for them" (p. 20).

Other strengths were presented under the theme – *nature of the program.* According to this theme, fairness, consistency, a restrictive environment, and an immediate strategy to deal with misbehavior were terms used to characterize ISS. ISS was also viewed as a clearly defined consequence for inappropriate behavior. It also offered continuous supervision, called for detailed documentation, emphasized the importance of academics, and established clear expectations for students. These findings

were in keeping with those of Johnson (1991).

The suggestions that ISS kept students in school, gave them the opportunity to work in a smaller area with a smaller student-teacher ratio, and required them to work on problem behavior were germane to the theme *assisted in keeping students in school.* Another theme was *ISS had staff, parent, and student support.* About two percent of the respondents noted that some students supported the ISS program. The fourth and fifth themes were *ISS encouraged self-discipline and protected rights*, and *ISS served as an intervention strategy and provided counseling*, respectively. ISS was viewed as time-out for the referring teacher and student, and in addition it provided students the opportunity to reflect on their behavior. These ideas were subsumed under the former theme, while placing students in a restrictive environment as a logical consequence for inappropriate behavior, behavior modification, and counseling fell under the latter. These findings lend support to those of Johnson (1991), and of Sullivan (1988).

Weaknesses of ISS. Participants listed the following three main weaknesses of their ISS program: a) not having a specific ISS room, b) the lack of adequate supervision of the ISS program, and c) the failure to conduct follow-up procedures with former ISS students. Only one of these shortcomings – the lack of adequate supervision of the ISS program – appeared on Johnson's (1991) list of "the three main problems with the ISS program" which included the need for a better ISS facility and failure of teachers to send assignments for ISS students.

Respondents also reported that ISS was ineffective with some students. In some cases ISS was viewed as a reward – some students liked it. Additionally, there were too many students who were referred to ISS, repeatedly. Inadequate facilities and the lack of resources were shortcomings in some programs. There were inconsistencies regarding the use of ISS; it was over-used, and sometimes used as a "dumping ground." Some respondents felt that there was a need to limit the number of times a student could be assigned to ISS per term, and the number of students in ISS at any given time. There were also concerns about the limited academic help ISS students received. Some participants also felt that the length of referral to ISS was too short. The failure of teachers to forward assignments or enough assignments for students in ISS was a major problem. Respondents also expressed concerns about the lack of a specific full-time ISS

teacher, the lack of ISS training for teachers, and insufficient staff to supervise ISS. Additionally, respondents cited the lack of: counseling, funding, parental support, ISS data-collection procedures, and ISS rules as problem areas. These findings were in keeping with those of Johnson (1991), of Opuni et al. (1991), of Sullivan (1988), and of Matherson (1982).

Suggestions for improving ISS. Participants in the current study listed, most frequently, the need for a specific, adequate room, a full-time ISS staff member, and the incorporation of counseling in the ISS program as recommendations for improving their ISS program. The first two findings lend support to those of Johnson (1991) who requested two recommendations from respondents.

Other recommendations for improving ISS included: a) limiting the number of students who would be housed in ISS at any given time; b) having them stay in ISS for longer periods of time when necessary; c) having them work on behavior packages; d) providing them academic help; e) not allowing them to take part in extra-curricular activities; f) having in-service training in ISS; and g) having follow-up procedures for ISS students. It should be noted that five of these recommendations (c, d, e, f and g) for improving ISS were reported by some respondents as being part of their ISS program. Respondents also suggested that the ISS room should be located in a secluded area, and it should contain study carrels, text books, and computers. Additionally, complete teacher support for the program was desirable for improving ISS. Some respondents suggested better communication with: a) staff regarding students' assignments and the status of the ISS student and b) with parents, students and staff regarding the purpose of ISS. Teachers should also inform parents/guardians by telephone prior to placing students in ISS, and should conduct follow-up meetings with them at the end of the student's stay in ISS.

Some respondents were of the opinion that there ought to be guidelines for referring students to ISS. In addition, students should be subjected to a limited number of referrals to ISS, and repeat offenders should be made to suffer other consequences. Finally, adequate funding, having ISS data collection and evaluation procedures, and having clearly spelled-out ISS rules, objectives, and philosophy were ideas for improving ISS. (In the current study some respondents reported that adequate funding, data

collection and evaluation procedures, and clearly spelled-out ISS rules were part of their ISS program.) These findings substantiate the findings of Johnson (1991), Whitfield and Bulach (1996), and Sullivan (1988).

Daily Operation of ISS

The literature suggested that a number of characteristics are usually present in a successful ISS program. In the present study research *question 12* sought information regarding the components of the daily ISS program. The key daily operational features include: a person assigned to monitor the program, communication, ISS rules, class assignments, record keeping, and counseling. Each of these is explained below.

Staffing. Sullivan (1989a) recommended the recruitment of a full-time qualified, trained staff member to coordinate the program rather than staffing the suspension room with rotating or part-time personnel. She further pointed out that "when a combination of teachers share the responsibility for the operation of the ISS program, there is less disciplinary continuity, little individualized assistance, and reduced teacher insight into students' behavioral problems" (p. 34).

The majority of respondents (70%) in the present study reported that the principal and assistant/vice-principal worked in the ISS program, while 40% indicated two or more teachers who rotate, and 39%, in total, stated that guidance counselors, clerical staff, and teacher's assistants – two of whom were specifically hired, in two schools, as ISS supervisors. These findings support those of Johnson (1991), of Sullivan (1988), of Haupt (1987), of Angiolillo (1986), of Pare (1983), of Matherson (1982), and of Hudson (1980). Specifically, Matherson (1982) reported that the ISS program was usually staffed by a professional educator either full- or part-time, while both Hudson (1980) and Angiolillo (1986) stated that teachers staffed the ISS program more than any other school personnel, and Pare (1983) indicated that ISS was operated by a teacher's aide. Haupt (1987) reported that the assistant principal was primarily responsible for the administration of the program whereas a team of teachers was mainly responsible for the daily in-classroom operation of the program.

Communication. The findings of the current study reveal that, whether students were assigned to ISS by an administrator or a teacher, parents were notified of the referral

by telephone and by mail. This finding lend support to that of Sullivan (1988) in School Division C, and also to the arguments of Short (1988a). Johnson (1991) pointed out that "parent involvement in the ISS program was confined to they being contacted when their children were assigned to ISS" (p. 171). Foster and Kight (1988) reported that "12% [of the participants] indicated that parental conferences were used in conjunction with the ISS program, 29% said [that it was] not a regular part of the program, and 59% ignored the question" (p. 21) regarding parental conferences being part of the ISS program.

The referring teacher or administrator, in the present study, informed the ISS teacher and other teachers about a student's referral to ISS by telephone or e-mail. This corroborates the finding of Sullivan (1988) in School Division C.

ISS rules and procedures. The study revealed that, on arrival to the ISS room, some students were required to describe the incident, in writing, that precipitated their referral, while others were asked to complete a behavior improvement plan. All students were required to work on academic assignments, and in some cases on specific behavior packages. However, one of the eleven interviewees reported that students rarely worked on assignments: sometimes they were too angry and slept instead, and sometimes they became aggressive and vocal, and had to be referred to an administrator.

Having ISS students work on academic assignments prepared by the regular classroom teacher was in keeping with the findings of Johnson (1991) and Sullivan (1988) in School Divisions A and C. According to Sullivan (1988), "The original ISS program [in School Division B] contained no specific list of rules and procedures. The details of daily operation were decided by the ISS teacher and/or the site administrators" (p. 89). DiSciullo (1984), a principal of a junior high school in Dix Hills, New York reported that students, on arriving in the ISS room, were required to fill out a questionnaire concerning their "behavior, friends, personality, goals, habits, strengths, and weaknesses" (p. 329). Sullivan (1988) found that sleeping in ISS was prohibited in School Division A, while Foster and Kight (1988) claimed that three percent of the respondents reported that ISS students were also not allowed to sleep while in the ISS room.

The findings of the current research revealed that in schools with any of the grades 7 through 12 in three cities in Alberta ISS rules were presented to students in a

variety of ways. Forty-two percent of the respondents reported that ISS rules were reviewed at the beginning of each day, 32% claimed that the rules were listed in the student's handbook and newsletters, 22% suggested that the rules were enclosed in a letter to parents or guardians when their son/daughter was assigned an ISS, and 15% noted that the ISS rules were posted in the ISS room. Additionally, fewer than 15%, in total, stated that the rules were discussed verbally, with each student, usually at the beginning of his/her tenure in ISS, or that the rules were identical to classroom rules, and students were informed of them throughout the year. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one of the alternative responses.) These findings were in keeping with those of Sullivan (1988). Johnson (1991) remarked that in her study "most of the respondents [reported that they] informed the students of the ISS rules and procedures and of the consequences for not following the ISS rules and procedures" (pp. 115, 117). Ferrone and Piraino (1990) state, "Each student assigned to ISS [in their high school] first meets with the [ISS] teacher, [and] at that time the rules governing ISS are reviewed and signed by the student" (p. 16).

In the current study the majority of respondents claimed that suspendees were required to have lunch in the ISS room. Requiring suspendees to have lunch in the ISS room was also reported by DiSciullo (1984), by Johnston (1987), and by Sullivan (1988). A few participants provided additional rules governing lunch for suspendees, as follows: a) suspended students had lunch at the same time as non-suspended students, b) suspendees had lunch in an isolated area in the cafeteria, and c) suspendees' lunch break was scheduled when other students were not on lunch break. These findings corroborate the findings of Sullivan (1988) and of Siskind et al. (1993). Patterson (1985) and Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) also reported that some ISS students' lunch breaks were not scheduled at the same time as those of other students.

A majority of respondents in the present study indicated that ISS students were permitted to go to the washroom individually, unescorted. This finding was in keeping with Sullivan's (1988). In some schools students were also granted escorted washroom breaks, on an individual basis, and washroom breaks at designated time, unescorted. Additionally, some students were not allowed a washroom break because they were referred to ISS for only one class period. These findings differ from that of Sullivan

(1988), and the program described by DiSciullo (1984). Both writers reported that ISS students, as a group, were granted monitored washroom breaks.

Students assigned to ISS in the present study were restricted from taking part in certain activities. The most frequently selected restrictions, by the majority of participants, were restriction: from socializing in ISS, sleeping in the room, and moving about the room. These findings support those of Foster and Kight (1988). In addition, a few respondents in the current study suggested that in their school ISS students were not allowed to: a) leave the room without permission; b) idle the time away; c) listen to music while in the room; d) use the telephone without permission; e) eat or drink during class; f) write notes to friends; g) have washroom breaks; h) have cafeteria privileges; i) swear; and j) harass other students. These restrictions differ from those reported by Siskind et al. (1993), by Johnson (1991), by Angiolillo (1986), by Ferrone and Pirainso (1990), by DiSciullo (1984), by Weiss (1983), and by Chobot and Garibaldi (1982). Instead, according to Siskind et al. (1993), "middle schools [did] not allow their ISS students to attend school activities, [while] three of the high schools [allowed] ISS students to participate in social and academic activities during regular school hours" (p. 3). Johnson (1991), Angiolillo (1986), and Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) reported that ISS students were not permitted to take part in extra-curricular activities. DiSciullo (1984), Ferrone and Piraino (1990), and Weiss (1983) observed that ISS students were not allowed to socialize with other students. Finally, Weiss (1983) also noted that ISS students were not permitted to return to school, on that day, once they were escorted/transported off school grounds.

A little more than half the respondents in the current study indicated that students who disobeyed ISS rules received an OSS, while 43% noted that such students were further assigned to ISS for an extra day or days. These consequences for breaking ISS rules were in keeping with those reported by Sullivan (1988), by Dorrell and Katcher (1984), and by Weiss (1983).

A majority of the respondents in the present research reported that students in their school had to serve the time initially specified before they were released from ISS. A little more than half the participants indicated that students had to complete all assigned class work prior to getting out, while a few (18%) of the respondents claimed

that students could earn credit for good behaviour which would reduce the initial specified time. These stipulations were in keeping with those reported by Johnson (1991). Chobot and Garibaldi (1982), Patterson (1984), and Ferrone and Piraino (1990) noted that ISS students had to complete all assignments before they were allowed to return to their regular classes. Additionally, 19% of the respondents in the current study suggested that: a) the suspendee had to follow ISS rules and stay on task; b) parents/guardians had to meet with an administrator, depending on the reason for referral before their son or daughter was re-admitted to class; c) the suspendee had to meet with the referring teacher after school and resolve the issue; d) the suspendee had to sign an Action Plan sheet, and also have it signed by a parent/guardian, teacher, and an administrator; and e) the suspendee had to complete a learning packet on the specific misbehavior. The findings "b" and "e" along with the first two mentioned in the paragraph, corroborate the findings of Sullivan (1988).

Assignments. In the present study a vast majority of respondents (97%) chose the first of six alternative responses provided in the questionnaire indicating that ISS students in their school were required to work on assignments provided by the regular classroom teachers. This finding was in keeping with that of Siskind et al. (1993), of Johnson (1991), of Sullivan (1988), of Angiolillo (1986), of Short and Noblit (1985), of Weiss (1983), and of Bone (1982). Additionally, a) 78% of the participants indicated that ISS students worked on homework assigned by their regular teachers; b) 44% checked "having students read library books;" c) 29% reported that students worked on pre-designed work packets or booklets; and d) three percent of the participants checked "having ISS students take an ability test." When work packets or booklets were used 14%, 10%, 10%, 8% and 7% of the respondents indicated that the packets or booklets contained social skills, reading comprehension, basic skills, values clarification, and basic English skills exercises, respectively. Six percent of the respondents also indicated that ISS students had to complete assignments that required them to reflect on their behavior. (Note: Percentages do not equal 100%; participants checked more than one of the alternatives provided.) These findings lend support to those of Sullivan (1988) and of Stessman (1984). Sullivan (1988) also reported in her study, that in School Division A "often, the homework assignments [were] not given to the [ISS] students until the end of

the school day in an attempt to prevent them from hurrying through their other work" (pp. 56 – 57).

In the current study 43% of the respondents indicated that ISS students in their school were occasionally assisted with the work assigned by the regular classroom teacher, 40% noted that ISS students in their school were usually assisted with their work, and 11% reported that ISS students in their school were always assisted with their work. Patterson (1985) pointed out that the rule requiring students to stay in ISS until they had completed all assignments, even though they had served their prescribed number of days, motivated students not only to accept tutoring, but also to actively seek such help. Sullivan (1988) reported that the majority of ISS students in School Divisions B and C received tutorial assistance, from their ISS teacher, on a regular basis. Johnson (1991) noted that 48% of the participants, in her study, said that ISS students "received help or tutoring with their work" (p. 116). In contrast, five percent of the respondents in the present study stated that in their school ISS students were never assisted with their work. This finding was in keeping with that of Whitfield and Bulach (1996) who observed that the results in their study suggest that faculty did not perceive that ISS students received academic assistance. They added that when faculty members were asked whether they should offer ISS "students academic assistance, especially if they are behind in their work, 83% disagreed that this should be the purpose of ISS" (p. 13).

A majority of respondents in the current research claimed that students received credit for satisfactorily completing assignments while in ISS. This finding lends support to the findings of Foster and Kight (1988), and of Johnson (1991). The former reported that "middle school and junior high students [were] more likely to receive some classroom credit during their ISS period" (p. 18). On the other hand, 12% of the respondents in the present study indicated that students did not receive credit for completing assignments while in ISS. This finding is in keeping with that of Foster and Kight (1988). These researchers stated that "schools least likely to provide [students] classroom credit for [work completed] in ISS are central suburban high schools or schools having enrollments of 1,000 or more" (p. 18).

Record keeping. Respondents indicated that the data collected in the ISS programs in Alberta's public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7

through 12 included: the reason for referral to ISS, the number of students referred to ISS, written descriptions of each student's behaviour while in ISS, the grade level and gender of student, the number of repeat referrals, and the nature of work completed by ISS student. These findings corroborate the findings of Sullivan (1988). Additionally, in the current study the names of the persons who assigned the students to ISS, and the dates when the students were assigned to ISS were collected. However, these bits of information were not included on Sullivan's (1988) list which also contained the following: race of the suspended student, "a written description of each student behavioral progress while in ISS" (p. 86), psychological and school achievement test results, "conferences with the students and their parents [reports]" (p. 46), and "academic and behavioral follow-up plans and their success rate" (p. 118).

Counseling

Twenty-two percent of the participants in the current study indicated that counseling was not part of their school's ISS program, while 52% checked the alternative "counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with some ISS students." A little over seven percent of the respondents in the current study reported that in their school counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with all ISS students, and about seven percent reported that in their school it was conducted by the guidance counselor in small groups with some students. Additionally, a total of 19% noted, in the "other" category, that counseling was conducted by: a) teachers on a one-to-one basis, b) the principal or vice-principal with all ISS students on a one-to-one basis, c) the Curriculum/Team Leader with all students, d) Behavior Management staff, e) the Family Support worker or school psychologist, and f) a Social Work student.

The finding that twenty-two percent of the respondents in the present study indicated that counseling was not a part of their school's ISS program was not as great as the percentages reported by Whitfield and Bulach (1996), by Johnson (1991), by Moore (1989), and by Foster and Kight (1988). In particular, Whitfield and Bulach (1996) pointed out that when faculty members were questioned about students receiving counseling while in ISS "63% either disagreed or found the item to be not applicable. This strongly suggest that faculty does not feel that students [should] receive counseling

while being detained in ISS" (p. 20). Johnson (1991) indicated that counseling was noticeably lacking in most ISS programs in her study. In her words, "Less than a majority [44%] of the students received individual counseling" (p. 117) while in ISS. Moore (1989) found that 68% of the schools in her study had ISS programs, and about one-third of these programs had no counseling interventions. Foster and Kight (1988) remarked that in their study "three out of four programs [did] not make any provisions for counseling ISS students during the ISS period" (p. 20).

Short and Noblit (1985) claimed that only one of the ten "good" programs studied had a therapeutic component. With respect to the Berkeley County ISS program, Siskind et al. (1993) found that "the programs [were] more punitive than therapeutic, and counseling [was] not used systematically and [did] not have a consistent set of goals" (p. 8). Whitfield and Bulach (1996) stated that purely punitive ISS programs "serve only to punish and not to improve student behavior .... [An] ISS program should have a therapeutic component to address negative attitudes and behavior" (p. 4).

Fifty-two percent of the respondents in the current research reported that some ISS students in public and separate schools, in three cities in Alberta, which contain any of the grades 7 through 12, were counseled, on a one-to-one, basis by guidance counselors. Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) found that in the large school districts three of the four ISS programs provided some combination of academics and counseling. These researchers elaborated that in their study "counseling practices varied. In two of the programs, credential-holding counselors were part of the staff, although they worked apart from the building's regular counseling staff. In the other two districts, counseling was handled by teachers assigned to the program" (pp. 325 – 326). Sullivan (1988) stated that in School Divisions B and C, although counseling was part of all ISS programs, counseling was conducted with some, but not all ISS students. In School Division B, "in approximately half of the current ISS programs the major counseling responsibility still rests with the guidance department. In the other half, individual counseling is conducted by the ISS teacher with students, as time and teacher duties permit" (p. 95).

Wilkerson (2001) conducted a multi-site case study of five ISS programs run by guidance counselors. The researcher reported that "at all of the sites the counselor was

noted to be essential for effecting a successful program .... System-wide, the program was determined to be remedial rather than punitive with counselors as a necessary component" (p. 2040A). Nielsen (1979a) also claimed that "school counselors can generate positive feelings towards the ISS program by [trumpeting] positive examples of students whose conduct has improved" (p. 328).

In the current study, respondents indicated that administrators, teachers, and teachers' assistants counseled the students who were referred to ISS. This finding was consistent with the writing of DiSciullo (1984) and the findings of Sullivan (1988). Specifically, Sullivan (1988) reported in her study that in School Divisions A, B, and C counseling was conducted by the ISS teacher. Additionally, the counseling techniques employed by members of the three constituencies in the current study include one or more of the following: a) a private review of the inappropriate behavior with the ISS student, b) formulation of alternative behavior choices with the student, c) writing exercises that include a personal student behavior plan, d) a discussion of one's feelings about school, e) formulation of goals, f) probing to get to the root of the problem, g) having students vent their feelings, h) discussing social skills that are needed to handle daily living, and i) taking responsibility for one's behavior. These findings corroborate the findings of Sullivan (1988), particularly in School Division C.

Forty-nine percent of the respondents in the current study indicated that students were assigned to ISS for a full day, while 26% reported part of a full day. These finding differ from that of Johnson (1991) who reported that the majority (61%) of the participants in her study indicated that students were assigned to ISS for one day while 7% indicated part of the day. However, Johnson (1991) claimed that assigning students to ISS for one only day brings "up the issue of adequate time to address causes and to make a difference with students" (p. 174). Nielsen (1979a) stated that some teachers complained "that 'not all students are reformed' in the program" (p. 328). The writer indicated that one hour of counseling (academic work comprises most of the program) adolescents, per day, some "with problems that have developed over many years, cannot always [rehabilitate them] in ten days" (328) – the length of time they were referred to ISS. Foster and Kight (1988) noted that "some programs work quite successfully with a minimal amount of structured counseling for students. Indeed, some students assigned to

ISS may require only a brief discussion with a guidance counselor" (p. 9).

Six interviewees in the current study indicated that guidance counselors counseled ISS students, and described the counseling techniques that were used. The techniques included one or more of the following: a) one-on-one discussion of the behavior that got the student in trouble, b) alternative ways of handling the situation, c) developing a plan that would help the student get back in class, d) developing a plan to ensure that the behavior was not repeated, e) group counseling sessions, and f) behavior management sessions. These findings were in keeping with those of Siskind et al. (1993) and of Leatt (1987). However, Sullivan (1988) reported that in School Division A "students no longer meet routinely with a counselor when placed in ISS. Instead, most counseling is conducted by the suspension room coordinator" (p. 52). In School Division B, "in approximately half of the ISS programs the major counseling responsibility rests with the guidance department. Guidance counselors usually meet with individual students .... Group counseling is still practiced in two ISS programs" (p. 95). In School Division C "the role of the school guidance counselor in the ISS program is usually that of a consultant" (pp. 132 – 133).

Bob, a behavior management specialist, claimed that he was not a teacher, instead, his training was in psychiatry and counseling. He further noted that schools have erred in the area of counseling. They usually picked the nice teacher who could "talk" to the students, but that did not have the necessary qualifications in counseling. Sullivan (1989a) maintained that counseling should be conducted by qualified personnel. Mizell (1978) stated that the counseling models employed should be consistent with the goals he suggested (see goals p. 31). He also pointed out that it is inappropriate "to use counseling models that manipulate the student or start from the assumption that it is only the student's behavior that needs to be modified. Approaches which tend to mask or misidentify the root problem should be avoided" (p. 222).

In the current study some respondents reported: a) a lack of counseling in their school's ISS program; b) that counseling was conducted in their school with some ISS students on a one-on-one basis by the guidance counselor; and c) although some teachers lacked the necessary qualifications in counseling yet they were called on to counsel students. However, Foster and Kight (1988) also reported in their study that some ISS

programs were quite successful with a minimal amount of structured counseling. These researchers added that some ISS students only required a brief discussion with a guidance counselor. This raises some concern regarding Johnson's (1991) claim that assigning students to ISS for only one day brings up the issue of adequate time to address causes of misbehavior. For example, one may speculate that assigning some students to ISS for half of a full day, as reported in the current study, maybe adequate for those who may require only a brief discussion with a guidance counselor.

Part of Over All Discipline

Interviewees believed that ISS was part of the discipline strategy. Alternatives for addressing student behavior have changed little over the years. School administrators and teachers still select from disciplinary methods which include: detention, OSS, parent conference, behavior contracts, referral to an administrator, clean-up duty, home schooling, positive re-enforcers, involving the police, and expulsion. Pare (1983) and Dorrell and Katcher (1984) stated that ISS adds to the disciplinary measures available to school personnel. Short, Short, and Blanton (1994) postulated that "if the ISS program is not a part of a total school discipline program, it may function only to segregate offenders. Schools must decide what ISS is to accomplish in the total discipline program" (p. 24). Sullivan (1988) and Johnson (1991) recommended that ISS should be part of a school's overall disciplinary plan, "and not a consequence for all offenses, regardless of severity" (Sullivan, 1988, p. 191).

In the present study ISS was used as a consequence for a variety of offenses which included failure to do homework, truancy, skipping class, not being prepared for class, and missing home-room check (see table 4.10). According to one of the eleven interviewees, ISS was not used in a systematic manner; everyone did not adhere to the referral policy, and in some instances teachers did not enforce ISS rules. These findings tend to support Mizell's (1978) call for the appointment of a "gatekeeper" of the ISS program; a staff member who is responsible for screening referrals to ISS. The use of ISS in this manner was also not in keeping with some of Sullivan's (1988) recommendations regarding referral to ISS.

Summary

In this study, "To provide an alternative to OSS" was the most frequently suggested reason for developing and implementing an ISS program. This was also one of the reasons reported by Chobot and Garibaldi (1982), Sullivan (1988), and Johnson (1991).

Study participants indicated that principals, vice-principals, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students were involved in the development of ISS. These findings were in keeping with that of Moore (1989) and of Johnson (1991). Vice-principals, principals, and teachers were most frequently involved in the implementation of ISS programs. These findings lends support to that of Haupt (1987) and Sullivan (1988). Approximately 25% of the schools contacted by telephone did not have an ISS program, while in Johnson's (1991) study 35% did not have an ISS program. However, the researcher notes that the Johnson (1991) study was completed ten years earlier than the present study and the percentage figure she mentioned may be out-of-date. In the current study opposition to ISS was mainly centered on lack of funds, inadequate facilities, and insufficient staff to supervise the program. These findings were in keeping with those of Johnson (1991).

In the current study schools with a student population of between 300 and 600 students had the highest percentage of ISS programs, while schools with a student population in excess of 900 students had the lowest percentage of ISS programs. These findings differed from that of Johnson (1991) who reported that schools with student populations of between 100 and 699 had the highest percentage of ISS programs, while school with student populations under 100 had the lowest percentages of ISS programs.

In the present study 69% of the responses to the item regarding the philosophy behind the ISS program fell in the custodial/strict authority category, where the main focus was on punishment for misbehavior. This supports the findings of Garrett (1981), of Sullivan (1988), and of Moore (1989). Comments made by 31% of the respondents fell in the control/healthy discipline category, where the main focus is to rehabilitate students, and this corroborated the finding of Sullivan (1988).

The most frequently suggested goals for the ISS programs in operation in public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12, in three cities in

Alberta were: to provide an alternative to OSS, to remove the problem student from the classroom, to influence students through counseling to choose to behave appropriately, and to help students develop self-discipline. The goal of providing an alternative to OSS was also one of several cited by Johnson (1991).

Based on the information provided by respondents in the current study there was little certainty regarding the theoretical underpinnings of the ISS programs in Alberta's public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12. Additionally, respondents in the current study indicated that inadequate funding played a role in the implementation of the ISS program in Alberta. Matherson (1982) and Johnson (1991) found that the ISS programs in their study were under-funded.

In the current study ISS programs were: a) mainly housed in the principal's or vice-principal's office, b) isolated from other classrooms but typically located in the same building, or c) were located in a variety of other locations. These findings were in keeping with that of Johnson (1991). In addition, respondents in the current study reported a variety of needs pertaining to different ISS programs in Alberta: some wanted carrels; others a larger room, books, computers, a specific ISS teacher, or a telephone. Opuni et al. (1991) reported, in their study, that there was a need for study carrels and a larger room.

The majority of participants in the current study indicated that no training was provided for ISS staff, while 15% said that in-service ISS workshops were provided on an on-going basis. These findings were in keeping with those of Sullivan (1988). Additionally, the majority of respondents stated the length of students' referral to ISS was determined by administrators, in accordance with a predetermined schedule. In contrast, Sullivan (1988) and Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) reported the absence of written referral guidelines. However, Sullivan (1988) noted in her study that formal guidelines for students' referral to ISS existed in the original ISS proposals of School Divisions B and C.

In the current study, disruption in class, insubordination, verbal abuse, fighting, skipping class, and failure to do homework were identified by respondents as resulting in students placement in ISS. These findings were in keeping with those of Angiolillo (1986), of Foster and Kight (1988), of Sullivan (1988), and of Opuni et al. (1991). Also

reported by respondents in the present study was that possession or use of illegal substances, and possession or use of a weapon were deemed too serious to be dealt with through ISS. These findings corroborate those of Foster and Kight (1988) and of Sullivan (1988).

A majority of respondents in the current study reported that the principal and vice-principal assigned students to ISS. This finding substantiates that of Sullivan (1988) and of Johnston (1987). The average length of referral to ISS in the current study was one day, and this was also reported by the majority of participants in Johnson's (1991) study.

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents in the present study indicated that one to four students, per day, were assigned to ISS. Sullivan (1988) reported an average of five referrals per day. Additionally, in the present study, a majority of respondents indicated that no limit was placed on the number of times a student could be referred to ISS. Siskind et al. (1993) said six schools, in their study, limited the number of times a student would be assigned to ISS in a year.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants reported that between one and five percent of students in Alberta's schools that were part of the current study were assigned to ISS during the past academic year. Johnson (1991) indicated that 63% of the respondents reported five percent or fewer of the students in the ISS schools in her study were involved in the ISS program during the preceding school year.

Thirty-one percent of the respondents in the present study reported that their school had no follow-up procedures, 28% indicated that the guidance counselor occasionally talked to the students during the following weeks, and 39% described the follow-up procedures in the "other" column. These findings differed from those of Johnson (1991) and of Sullivan (1988).

Twenty-two percent of the participants in the current study indicated that their ISS program was not evaluated, 36% reported that their ISS program was evaluated yearly, and 13% suggested various times when their ISS program was evaluated in the "other" column. These findings differed from those of Sullivan (1988).

In the present study ISS there was little certainty regarding the status of ISS cases; whether they had increased, had stayed the same, or had decreased since the program

began. With reference to the recidivism rate of ISS the majority of participants indicated that the rate had decreased moderately or greatly. These findings differ from those of Clark (1980), of Opuni et al. (1991), of Knes (1995), of Matusiak (1193) and of Johnson (1991).

About 53% of the participants in the current study reported that the number of OSS cases had decreased moderately or greatly since OSS began. This finding was in keeping with the finding of Clark (1980) and of Johnson (1991). Regarding the recidivism rate of OSS cases, 66% of the respondents indicated that the rate had decreased moderately or greatly. This finding was not in keeping with that of Lynch (1983) who reported that OSS students showed higher rates of recidivism and absenteeism.

The majority of interviewees in the present study reported that administrators, teachers, and parents supported ISS. This finding supports that of Sullivan (1988), of Anding (1984), of Hochman (1985), of Bowdring (1988), and of Shuman (1994).

The three main strengths of ISS identified in the current research were: a) its ability to remove the disruptive student from the classroom, b) its tendency to serve as a deterrent, and c) its ability to have students get caught-up on assignments. These findings lend support to those of Opuni et al. (1991) and of Sullivan (1988). On the other hand, one of the main weaknesses reported in the current study, namely, the lack of adequate supervision was also reported by Johnson (1991).

Suggestions made by respondents in the present study for improving ISS included: providing a specific room for ISS students, having a full-time ISS staff person, and incorporating of counseling in the ISS program. These findings corroborate those of Johnson (1991).

The majority of respondents in the current study reported that the principal and vice-principal staffed the ISS program, while 40% indicated two or more teachers who rotated, and 39%, in total, stated guidance counselors, clerical staff, and teacher's assistants. These findings support those of Johnson (1991), of Sullivan (1988), of Haupt (1987), of Angiolillo (1986), of Pare (1983), of Matherson (1982), and of Hudson (1980).

Parents in the present study were notified by telephone and/or by mail whenever their son or daughter was referred to ISS. This finding lends support to that of Sullivan

(1988).

A large majority of respondents in the current ISS indicated that ISS students were required to work on academic assignments prepared by the regular classroom teacher. Johnson (1991) and Sullivan (1988) reported similar findings.

The findings of the current study indicate that ISS students were informed about the ISS rules in their school in one or more of the following ways: they were reviewed at the beginning of each day, they were listed in the students' handbook, they were enclosed in a letter to parents, and they were posted in the ISS room. These findings corroborate those of Sullivan (1988).

In the present study the majority of respondents indicated that, in their schools, suspendees were required to have lunch in the ISS room. This practice was also reported by DiSciullo (1984), by Johnston (1987), and by Sullivan (1988). Additionally, the majority of respondents reported that students were permitted to go to the washroom individually, unescorted. This finding was in keeping with Sullivan's (1988).

ISS students in the present Alberta study were restricted from socializing, sleeping, or moving about the room. These findings were in keeping with those of Foster and Kight (1988).

In reporting the consequences for disobeying ISS rules the majority of respondents in the current study identified two that were most frequently mentioned: OSS and being assigned extra days in ISS. These consequences were also reported by Sullivan (1988), by Dorrell and Katcher (1984), and by Weiss (1983).

A large majority of respondents in the current study indicated that students had to complete all assigned class work prior to getting out of ISS. Some respondents also reported that in their schools students could earn credit for good behavior that reduced their time in ISS that was initially assigned. These stipulations were similar to those in Johnson's (1991) study.

Data collected in ISS programs in Alberta's schools in the study included the following: reason for referral, number of students referred to ISS, written description of student's behavior while in ISS, grade level and gender of student, number of repeat referrals, and the nature of the work completed by the ISS student. These findings corroborate those of Sullivan (1988).

Twenty-two percent of the participants in the present study stated that counseling was not part of their school's ISS program. This finding was similar to Johnson's (1991). Fifty-two percent of the respondents in the current study reported that some ISS students were counseled by guidance counselors on a one-to-one basis. This finding was in keeping with Sullivan's (1988). Additionally, the reported counseling techniques were similar to those reported by Siskind et al. (1993) and by Leatt (1987).

The majority of respondents in the current study indicated that students were assigned to ISS for part of a day or for a full day. This finding lends support to that of Johnson (1991).

In the present study a majority of respondents indicated that ISS was part of their school's disciplinary plan, and according to Sullivan (1988), ISS should not be used for all infractions, regardless of the severity.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings along with a discussion of the implications of the study for theory, for practice, and for research. Following that, several conclusions are presented. The chapter ends with the researcher's reflections on the methodology employed and the issues that emanated from the study.

Overview

The study sought to explore and describe: a) the characteristics of the ISS program in schools which contain any of the grades 7 to 12, in the public and separate school districts in three urban centers in Alberta, and b) to identify factors which were perceived to support or inhibit the success of the programs. The findings were intended to provide school personnel and other interested parties with insights that would assist them in planning, implementing, evaluating, and updating ISS programs. The overview of this study reviews the conceptual frameworks and the research method employed in the study.

Conceptual Framework

The graphically depicted, theory-driven, descriptive, and exploratory conceptual framework (see Figure 2.1, p. 50) for this study arose from the literature pertaining to ISS. The displayed categories, which are connected by arrows, not only specified who and what will be studied by the researcher, but also assumed the existence of some relationships. Miles and Huberman (1994) noted that "a conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and the presumed relationships among them .... Conceptual frameworks are best done graphically, rather than in text" (pp. 18, 22).

The formulation of the research questions (see p. 5) for this study preceded the development of the conceptual framework. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the reverse of this strategy is also accepted. The writers add that the research questions represent "a more detailed operationalization of the study's conceptual framework" (p. 204). The research questions also pointed the researcher towards data-gathering devices

– questionnaires, interviews, and document collection.

Research Method

The current study employed quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate ISS programs in three cities in Alberta. Data were gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews, document search, and journal writing. A summary of the research instruments and methods of data analyses is presented below.

Questionnaire. An ISS questionnaire, based mainly on the work of Sullivan (1988) and Johnson (1991), was constructed by the researcher for use in the present study. The 48-item ISS questionnaire contained three sections – Section A sought background information, Section B, sub-divided into 12 parts, contained four open-ended questions along with questions that used a Likert scale, and Section C contained open-ended questions.

Semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview schedule containing eleven questions was used with a stratified, purposeful sample of eleven participants. The 30 to 45 minutes, face-to-face, individual interviews were audio-taped and later transcribed. The eleven transcribed interviews were returned to the respective interviewees who were given the opportunity to make changes, if they so desired. They were also asked to return the corrected transcript to the researcher in the stamped, self-addressed envelope that was provided. The data from the questionnaires and interviews served as the major sources of information for the research questions.

Document search. The documents made available to the researcher were dated 1994, 1998, or 2000-2001. An analysis of the documents provided the researcher with additional information, and/or information that substantiated that which was reported by respondents in the interviews or on the questionnaires.

Journal. In the current study, a journal containing descriptive and reflective notes was kept. The keeping of a journal was also suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2003).

Data analyses. Regarding data analyses, statistical analysis of the questionnaire data was conducted, first. The questionnaire data were tabulated by computer to determine frequency counts, percentages, and means, where applicable. The findings

from this analysis also assisted the researcher in formulating interview questions that were used to obtain further information that would fill the gaps that became apparent in the data which were collected by means of questionnaires.

Second was the analysis of the interview data, and this was sub-divided into two phases – preliminary and post interview analysis. Preliminary analysis of the recorded interviews began shortly after each interview was conducted, and this was followed by the preliminary analysis of documents and journal notes. During the post interview period, the transcribed interviews, responses to the open-ended questions on the questionnaires, documents, and journal notes were re-read, and key themes and ideas that arose were summarized and categorized.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study were presented in Chapter 4. In this section these findings are summarized under the headings (Development and Implementation of ISS, Philosophy, Goals, Models, and Elements) which are associated with the research questions.

Development and Implementation of ISS

This section summarizes the findings associated with the first four research questions that sought to determine the reasons for developing and implementing ISS programs, persons involved in their development and implementation, the extent of utilization of ISS, and the length of time ISS has been in operation.

Reasons for developing and implementing ISS programs. In the present study the three most frequently suggested reasons, by the majority of respondents, for developing and implementing an ISS program in their schools were as follows:

1. To provide an alternative to OSS
2. To provide a quiet environment in which students can work on their assignment(s)
3. To keep students in school in a supervised environment

During analysis of the interview data new themes – *the nature of the students* and *programs offered by the school* – that did not "fit" the categories that resulted from the analysis of the questionnaire data relating to the development and implementation of ISS,

emerged. *The nature of students* was described in terms of students who were mentally challenged and/or students who were diagnosed with behavior disorders by a psychologist or psychiatrist. *Programs offered by the school* were defined as either an Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) or a special education program.

Participants in the development and implementation of ISS. The vast majority of respondents in the study reported that assistant/vice-principals and principals were involved in the development of the ISS program in their school. Teachers, guidance counselors, parents, students, teacher assistants, division office personnel, school advisory council members, behavior management specialists, and secretaries were also involved in the process.

The majority of respondents reported that vice-principals, principals, and teachers were involved in the implementation of ISS. Additionally, between 15% and 42% of the respondents indicated that guidance counselors, parents, students, teacher assistants, division office personnel, secretaries, behavior management assistants, and discipline committee members were also involved in implementing the program.

Extent of utilization of ISS. Twenty-five percent of the 124 principals or vice-principals contacted by telephone stated that their school did not have an ISS program. The four predominant reasons, selected by these respondents, for not having an ISS program were:

1. Our school does not believe that ISS is effective.
2. Our school does not have the money to fund an ISS program.
3. Our school lacks the facilities.
4. Our school lacks the staff to supervise ISS; it's a management nightmare having to use teachers to run ISS.

When three factors – schools with ISS programs, school size, and type of district – were considered, it was found that schools with a student population of 301– 600 had the highest percentage, 52%, of ISS programs. Twenty-three public and nine separate schools were included in this category. Schools with a student population of 901– 1200, and 1201 – 1500 had the lowest, 3%, of ISS programs. The four schools in these categories were in the public school system.

Length of time ISS has been in operation. In the current study, eleven percent

of the respondents claimed that their schools' ISS program was over ten years old, while 54% indicated that their schools' ISS program was ten years old or less. Thirty-two percent of the respondents did not respond to the item regarding the age of their school's ISS program or reported that they were not knowledgeable about the age of their school's ISS program. Regarding not being knowledgeable about the age of their school's ISS program, four participants (2.3%) further stated that their school's ISS program was in operation when they took up duty at the school, while two others (1.3%) noted that their school's ISS was not viewed as a formal program; instead it was simply another alternative to OSS.

Philosophy

In this section a summary is provided of the findings associated with the fifth research question that deals with the philosophy behind the ISS program. These findings fell into two categories: custodial/strict authority and freedom with control/healthy discipline.

Custodial/strict authority. Briefly re-stated, "custodial educators identify a wide variety of behaviors as being problematic, [and] they favor handling problem behaviors with control techniques such as punishment" (Short et al. 1994, p. 7). In the present study the two most frequently suggested punitive responses, by 18.2% and 16.1% of the respondents, to inappropriate behavior were "imposing isolation by removing the student from the regular classroom;" and "having the student complete school assignments, but not take part in the normal routine of the day," respectively.

Freedom with control/healthy discipline. According to Nakamura (2000), healthy discipline includes communicating clearly defined limits, "offering a choice of a cooling-off period, providing an opportunity for students to solve the problem, [and] giving limited choices with a logical or natural consequence" (p. 220). The comments made by 31% of the respondents in the current study fell in this category.

Goals

The sixth research question sought to determine the goals of the ISS program. In the study, a large number of participants selected the following three alternatives as goals

of their school's ISS program:

1. Providing an alternative to OSS.
2. Removing the problem student from the classroom for a specified time.
3. Influencing students through counseling to choose to behave appropriately.

Models

In this section the discussion summarizes the findings related to the seventh research question which sought to determine whether ISS programs were patterned after a theoretical model. The findings pertinent to this research question are presented under two headings – Patterned After a Theoretical Model and Not Patterned After a Theoretical Model.

Patterned after a theoretical model. Of the 19 respondents (11%), in the study, who indicated that their ISS was patterned after a theoretical model, six (3.4%) suggested that their school's ISS program was based on *Time Out* theory, and four (2.3%) claimed that their school's ISS program was based on *Consequences*. Five respondents (2.8%) did not provide an explanation regarding the theoretical model after which their school's ISS was patterned, while four participants (3.3%) reported one of the following: a) the former principal brought back the idea from an Association for Supervision, Curriculum and Development (ASCD) conference; b) I read about it in a professional journal; c) we use a program which is based on a forgiveness model; and d) we are developing a process which is based on Barbara Coloroso's *Discipline With Dignity* and the principal's Master's thesis.

Not patterned after a theoretical model. Sixty-five respondents (37%), in the study, reported that their school's ISS was not patterned after a theoretical model. However, 28 respondents (16%) further stated that: a) their ISS program was an ad hoc program based on a variety of readings, other ISS programs in the district, and staff experiences, and b) ISS was used to accommodate working parents; when "home-care" was an issue ISS was assigned.

Elements

Research questions eight through fourteen sought information regarding the

elements of the ISS program. In this section the findings pertaining to these research questions are summarized under seven categories: funding, facilities, staff training, referral, follow-up, evaluation, and daily operation of ISS.

Funding. This section summarizes the findings pertaining to the eighth research question which addressed the sources of funding for ISS programs. Fifty-five percent of the participants in the study indicated that no funds were specifically allotted for the ISS program, and seven members of this group further stated that: a) staff members gave up one "prep" period, per seven day cycle, in order to supervise ISS, and b) the supervision of ISS was an administrative responsibility. Twenty percent of the participants noted that their schools' ISS program was funded from an allocation in the school's budget, while 25% provided no response to the item on the questionnaire or claimed that the item regarding funding for the ISS program was not applicable.

Facilities. Part of the ninth research question sought information regarding the location and suitability of the ISS facilities. The findings with respect to this research question are summarized in this section.

About 48% of the participants in the study reported that their school's ISS was conducted in the principal or vice-principal's office, while about 33% indicated that the ISS facilities, in their school, were isolated from other classrooms but located in the same building. Additionally, a few participants claimed that their ISS facilities were located in the midst of other classrooms; in a variety of locations, depending on the availability of room at the time; in the library; or in the staff workroom.

In the study, 40% of the participants reported that their schools needed carrels for the ISS room, 37% indicated that their ISS facilities were adequate, 29% stated that their schools needed a larger ISS room, and 14% claimed that their schools' ISS room needed more books and computers.

Staff training. This section presents a summary of the findings related to the eleventh research question that sought information regarding the training provided for ISS staff. A majority of respondents (61%) in the study claimed that no training in ISS was provided for staff, while 15% reported that on-going in-service education on ISS was provided. A few (5%) indicated that their school conducted a formal introductory workshop on ISS.

Referral. The tenth research question sought information pertaining to referral of students to ISS. The findings associated with referral, in the present study, fell in ten sub-categories, and these findings are summarized below. The sub-headings are displayed in *italics*, for the purpose of clarity.

Guidelines and communication of the guidelines. Four of the eleven interviewees reported that their school's guidelines for referring students to ISS were clearly stated, three claimed that the guidelines in their schools were not clearly stated, and one noted that guidelines in his school were lacking. Three interviewees hesitated to use the term "clearly stated" because they felt that each situation had to be weighed on its own merit, and sometimes that resulted in guidelines being waived.

Regarding communication of referral procedures, one interviewee claimed that the guidelines for referring students to ISS were not well communicated to parents and students. In contrast, four interviewees noted that in their schools the guidelines for assigning students to ISS were well communicated to students, parents, and staff.

Strategies employed prior to referral. In the present study, the majority of respondents indicated that the most commonly used interventions prior to referring students to ISS were: teacher-student conference, a telephone call to parents or guardians, referral to the principal or assistant/vice-principal, and lunch time or after-school detention. Additionally, a few respondents reported strategies such as time-out, the filling out of a case statement form, and referral of the student to a behavior specialist, prior to referral to ISS.

Misbehaviors that resulted in referral to ISS. According to the majority of respondents in the study, behaviors such as disruption in class, insubordination, verbal abuse, fighting, skipping class, and failure to do homework resulted in students' placement in ISS. However, 50% or fewer of the respondents claimed that in their schools disruption in class, insubordination, and verbal abuse were the three most frequent misbehaviors that resulted in students being assigned to ISS.

Misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS. A majority of respondents in the present study indicated that in their school possession or use of illegal substances and possession or use of a weapon were the top two misbehaviors that were deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS.

Persons who assigned students to ISS and duration of the referral. Eighty-one percent of the respondents in the study reported that the principal and vice-principals assigned students to ISS, and 50% of the participants further indicated that administrators were solely responsible for referring students to ISS in their schools. In addition, 40% of the respondents reported that teachers were permitted to assign students to ISS, while 14% and seven percent of the respondents noted that guidance counselors and parents, respectively, also had that authority. Four percent of the participants suggested that behavior management specialists, students themselves, lunchroom supervisors, and teacher assistants were permitted to assign students to ISS. Four of the interviewees, elaborating on student self-referral, said that such referral was based on the student having a bad day, and/or the student's need to catch-up on assignments.

In the present study, about 50% of the respondents claimed that the average length of referral to ISS was one day, while "part of a day" was suggested by about 25% of the participants. A few respondents reported that sometimes students were referred to ISS for several weeks with gradual return to class.

Determination of the length of referral. The majority of respondents reported that administrators determined the length of referral to ISS, according to the nature of the student's misbehavior, in compliance with a predetermined schedule.

Number of students assigned to ISS per day. The majority of respondents in the study reported that one to four students, per day, were assigned to ISS, while a few suggested between twenty-one to twenty-four students per day.

Number of times per academic year a student could be assigned to ISS. A majority of respondents in the study reported that there was no limit to the number of times, per academic year, that a student could be assigned to ISS. Additionally, 12% of the participants reported limits of twice, three, five, seven, and ten times per year. Three of the interviewees noted that students who misbehaved repeatedly were subjected to consequences other than ISS, while four interviewees reported that in their schools these students were assigned additional days in ISS.

Information on the referred student that was given to the ISS teacher. Regarding information on the referred student that was forwarded to the ISS teacher, 63% of the participants reported that the referring teacher wrote up or presented a verbal report

on the student's recent behavior, while about 33% of the respondents noted that the ISS teacher had access to the student's file.

Percentage of students assigned to ISS during the previous academic year. About 64% of the respondents in the current study reported that one to five percent of the student population were assigned to ISS during the past academic year, while 23% stated that between six and ten percent of the student population were referred to ISS. About 12% of the respondents claimed that eleven to fifteen percent of the students were assigned to ISS during the previous academic year, while one percent reported that twenty to thirty-five percent of the students were assigned to ISS during the previous academic year. One respondent from the school district's site for students with severe emotional and behavior problems recalled that in any given year almost all students were likely to be referred to ISS, at some time.

Follow-up

Part of the ninth research question explored the follow-up procedures conducted with students who were referred to ISS. The findings pertaining to this portion of the research question are summarized below.

In the present study, 31% of the respondents reported that their school did not have follow-up interventions with former ISS students, while 28% indicated that the guidance counselor occasionally talked to former suspendees during the following weeks. Additionally, a total of 39% of the participants noted that the principal, vice-principal, teachers, behavior management specialists, or a family support worker talked to former ISS students during the following weeks.

One interviewee said that when funding was available programs such as Conflict Resolution and Anger Management were conducted in her school, for a period of six or ten weeks, or sometimes these programs were offered twice a year. She further stated that some suspendees were referred to these programs after having served their ISS time.

Evaluation

The discussion in this section focuses on the responses to the thirteenth, the fourteenth, and part of the ninth research question. The findings are summarized under

the headings: Frequency of Evaluation, Nature of Evaluation, Effectiveness of ISS programs, Perceived Opinions Regarding ISS, Attitude about ISS, Strength of ISS, Weaknesses of ISS, and Suggestions for Improving ISS.

Frequency of evaluation. In the current study 20% of the participants indicated that their ISS program was not evaluated, while 36% reported that their program was evaluated annually, and this turned out to be the most frequently stated response. In addition, 13% of the respondents suggested that ISS was evaluated on: a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, twice a year, every couple of years, or every five years. (Thirty-one percent of the respondents did not provide a response to the item or indicated that they did not know if their school's ISS was evaluated.)

A total of 119 participants in the study provided information regarding the age of the program and the frequency of evaluation. There were some differences in responses based on the age of the program. For example, the percentage of "don't know/no response" was higher (40%) for the oldest program (20-30 years old), and the percentage of evaluated ISS programs lower (30%).

Nature of the evaluation. Regarding the nature of evaluation of the ISS programs, two themes emerged – *undecided about the evaluation format* and *informal evaluation* – in the present study, during the analysis of the interview data. One of the interviewees claimed that there was uncertainty about the format for evaluating ISS, while nine reported that their ISS program was informally evaluated. Informal evaluation was described in terms of comments made by staff members during private conversations and comments made by staff members at staff meetings. Comments such as, "It seemed to be working" was viewed as an evaluation of ISS. Informal evaluation was also thought of in terms of interest generated in ISS by old or new staff members, at staff meeting, and whether or not ISS became a priority with administrators. Another interviewee stated that every year parents and students were given the opportunity to comment on the running of the school, and if they had any major concerns about ISS these concerns would have been mentioned.

Effectiveness of ISS programs. The majority of respondents claimed that their schools' ISS program was very effective in removing the problem student from the classroom and serving as an alternative to OSS. Additionally, a few respondents reported

that their school's ISS program was mildly effective in: a) assessing students' progress in academic skills; b) diagnosing students' learning difficulties; c) focussing on instruction in the basic skills; and d) fashioning activities in home and school survival training for students. Some interviewees viewed ISS as a band-aid approach to a situation, and a creator of further discipline problems.

When respondents' ratings of the effectiveness of their ISS program in accomplishing certain goals were analyzed in conjunction with school size (≤ 300 students, 301 – 600 students, 601 – 900 students, and > 900 students) it was found that ten goals with means in the range of 2.50 to 4.00, moderately effective or very effective on the degree of effectiveness scale, were common to the four school-size categories. The first three goals common to the four school-size categories were as follows: a) to provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent; b) to influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately; and c) to help students develop problem-solving skills.

Fourteen percent of the respondents reported that the number of ISS cases had increased greatly or moderately since their school's ISS program began, 39% indicated that they had stayed the same, and 47% reported that they had decreased moderately or greatly. The researcher concluded that there was little certainty about the status of ISS cases since the program began. Regarding the recidivism rate of ISS, four percent of the respondents indicated that the recidivism rate of ISS had increased greatly, 38% reported that it had stayed the same, and 58% indicated that the recidivism rate of ISS had decreased moderately or greatly. Additionally, 73% of the respondents reported that the number of OSS cases had decreased moderately or greatly, and 66% indicated that the recidivism rate of OSS had decreased moderately or greatly.

Perceived opinions regarding ISS. Seven of the eleven interviewees in the study claimed that administrators, teachers, and parents supported ISS, while two interviewees reported that some administrators preferred OSS. Additionally, four interviewees indicated that students did not like having to spend time in ISS. Furthermore, one of the interviewees noted that ISS was mostly perceived as punishment by some students, and as a result a lot of time the remedial aspect of the program was lost. However, in contrast three interviewees claimed that some students liked ISS.

Attitude about ISS. In the present study a large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with nine of the sixteen statements on the questionnaire regarding various elements of their ISS program. For example, a majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements: a) the guidance counselor(s) in our school support the ISS program; b) teachers in our school support the ISS program; and c) parents of students at our school are in favor of the ISS program. A majority of the respondents also disagreed or strongly disagreed with five of the sixteen statements on the questionnaire regarding elements of their ISS program. For example, a majority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements: a) the stay in ISS is too short for much positive student behavior change to occur; b) too many students are assigned to ISS on any one day; and c) ISS is over-used as a disciplinary strategy in our school. Additionally, respondents were undecided about the items "The ISS program has a good reputation with students," and "Preparing lessons for students in ISS is an added burden for teachers."

Strengths of ISS. Thirty-three percent of the respondents in the current study suggested that the main strength of their school's ISS program was its ability to remove the disruptive student from the regular classroom, 25% stated that it was its tendency to serve as a deterrent, and 20% claimed that it was its ability to have students do their homework and get caught-up with assignments. Additionally, the strengths of the ISS program that were suggested by interviewees include: a) its tendency to keep students in school and require both students and teacher to work on the behavior problem; b) it had the support of staff, students, and parents; c) it encouraged self-discipline and protected rights; and d) it contained intervention strategies such as behavior modification and counseling.

Weaknesses of ISS. The three main weaknesses of the ISS program reported by respondents were the absence of a specific ISS room, inadequate supervision of the ISS program, and the failure to conduct "follow-ups" with former ISS students. Interviewees also suggested the following weaknesses: a) ISS was ineffective with some students; b) sometimes the ISS room was too small, poorly ventilated, and located in a "high traffic" area; c) ISS was used inconsistently; d) no limit was set on the number of ISS a student could receive per term, and the number of students assigned to ISS at one time; e) some

teachers failed to submit assignments for students in ISS; and f) in some cases ISS was not a formal program with a definite purpose, with evaluation procedures and with counseling strategies.

Suggestions for improving ISS. In the current study, responses to the open-ended item on the questionnaire regarding suggestions for improving the ISS program are as follows: the need for a specific, adequate ISS room, the need for a full-time ISS staff person, and the need to incorporate counseling in the ISS program. Respondents also proposed: a) limiting the number of students in ISS at any given time, and providing them academic help, b) improving communications with all staff members regarding the state of the ISS student, c) educating parents about ISS, d) limiting students to a set number of referrals, e) having other consequences for repeat offenders, f) adequate funding for ISS, and g) having ISS data collection and evaluation procedures.

Daily operation of ISS. In this section a summary of the findings related to research question 12, which focuses on the components of the daily ISS program, is presented. The findings are summarized under the headings Staffing, Communication, ISS Rules, Assignments, Record Keeping and Counseling, which are italicized, for the purpose of clarity.

Staffing. The majority of respondents in the study stated that the principal and vice-principal worked in the ISS program. Respondents also reported that teachers, guidance counselors, clerical staff, and teacher assistants worked in the ISS program. One of the respondents also indicated that in his school sometimes students were required to serve their ISS time in another teacher's classroom.

Communication. Two interviewees reported that in their school teachers have the authority to assign students to ISS, while two other interviewees claimed that in their school the authority to assign students to ISS resides solely with administrators. However, once the decision was made to refer a student to ISS, the ISS teacher, other teachers, and parents were notified of the referral by telephone, by mail, or by e-mail. One of the interviewees indicated that these parties were informed even though the student's ISS was only one class period long, or even when the student's ISS time began the next day. Students were also permitted to refer themselves to ISS. When students requested self-referral, an administrator would first inform the teachers of the request,

and most of the time the request was granted. Self-referral was not viewed as an official ISS, thus parents were not usually contacted.

ISS rules. The majority of respondents stated that ISS students were forbidden from socializing in the ISS room, sleeping in the room, or moving around the room. Additionally, interviewees reported that ISS students were required to work quietly on academic assignments, and, in some cases, on various behavior packages. The top three methods of informing the referred student of the ISS rules were: a) reviewing the rules at the beginning of each day, b) listing the ISS rules in the student handbook and newsletters, and 3) enclosing the rules in a letter to parents/guardians when a student was assigned an ISS.

A majority of participants reported that ISS students were required to have lunch in the ISS room. Regarding restroom breaks, a majority of respondents indicated that ISS students were permitted to go to the washroom individually and unescorted, while 22% noted that ISS students were escorted, individually. The majority of the participants also claimed that ISS students were not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities.

In the present study 54% of the respondents indicated that students who disobeyed ISS rules were given an OSS, while 43% noted that such students were assigned to ISS for an extra day. A vast majority of participants reported that ISS students were required to serve the specified time, while about 50% indicated that ISS students also had to complete all assigned class work, prior to getting out.

Assignments. A large majority of participants reported that ISS students worked on class assignments and homework assigned by the regular classroom teacher. Additionally, 43% indicated that in their school ISS students were occasionally assisted with their work, while 40% noted that ISS students in their school were usually assisted with their work. Most respondents claimed that ISS students were also given credit for satisfactorily completing assignments while in ISS.

Record keeping. "The reason for referral to ISS" was the most frequently selected alternative from among the eight alternative responses to the item on the questionnaire regarding data collection. No data were collected on the ethnicity of the referred students.

Counseling. Fifty-two percent of the participants claimed that counseling was

conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with some ISS students, while 22% stated that counseling was not part of their school's ISS program. Some interviewees claimed that administrators, teachers, teacher assistants, and/or guidance counselors counseled ISS students. Some interviewees further indicated that a private review of the inappropriate behavior with the ISS student and the formulation of alternative choices with the ISS student were, sometimes, included in the counseling strategy.

Emergent Themes

During the data analysis a number of findings emerged that were not related to the conceptual framework (see Figure 1, p. 50). This section presents a summary of the findings that relate to the themes: informal ISS and part of the over-all discipline.

Informal ISS

A small number of respondents indicated, on the questionnaire, that ISS was informally conducted. When questioned about the term "informal ISS" three interviewees reported that maybe some staff members in their school used the term because: a) ISS was in the developmental stage; b) ISS was rarely used, and when ISS was implemented it was conducted in the general office; c) our school lacks not only staff members to run the program, but also a special room in which to house the program; and d) in our school ISS was thought of by some staff members as merely a strategy to accomplish removal of students from the classroom. Additionally, one of the interviewees also claimed that it was a misconception for some staff members in his school to think that ISS was conducted informally. He further stated that because ISS was only a year old maybe it was still foreign to some of the teachers in the school.

Part of Over-all Discipline

Some of the interviewees in the current study stated that ISS was part of their school's discipline strategy. Five of the eleven interviewees reported that teachers in their school were encouraged to use classroom management techniques before resorting to ISS. Four interviewees indicated that positive and negative consequences were used in

their school to influence students to behave appropriately.

Implications

The current study generated theoretical, practical, and research implications for both researchers and practitioners. These implications are presented below.

Theoretical Implications

The present study of ISS programs, apparently the first of its kind in a Canadian setting, has provided data which are relevant to assertive discipline and Neo-Adlerian theory. However, some of the findings of the study support these theories, while some do not concur with them. The empirical data that relate to these theories are presented below.

Assertive discipline. The Canters (1992) postulate that the ways in which a teacher responds to students set the tone in the classroom. According to the writers the assertive response style is the most effective response style, and this "style is one in which the teacher clearly, confidently and consistently states his expectations to students and is prepared to back up these words with actions" (p. 27). They further indicated that "when a teacher responds assertively, he tells students exactly what will happen when [a] student chooses to behave and what will happen when [a] student chooses not to behave. No questions" (p. 27). Canter and Canter (1992) advocate that teachers should establish a formalized discipline plan, which consists of rules, positive recognition, and consequences – positive and negative – for responding to students' behavior. The establishment of order and obedience are the goals of this plan. They also noted that the teacher should not only teach the rules and consequences, but also review the rules frequently. Canter and Canter (1992) further pointed out that "students need to learn that negative consequences are a natural outcome of misbehavior" (p. 169).

The findings in the present study suggest that ISS, an established formalized discipline strategy in some schools, requires students' strict adherence to ISS rules. Forty-two percent of the respondents reported that in their school ISS rules were reviewed at the beginning of each day for the benefit of the assigned students. ISS students were not permitted to socialize, to move around the room, and to have cafeteria

privileges. They were required to work on assignments and various behavior packages. In some schools ISS students who disobeyed ISS rules were suspended from school or assigned additional days in ISS. These findings were in keeping with the Canter and Canter (1992) assertive discipline theory.

A few respondents reported not having a policy regarding ISS rules infractions; it was left to the ISS teacher's discretion. One of the interviewees pointed out that although ISS students were required to work on academic assignments they rarely did, and in some cases when referred students were too angry they slept instead. In this study it was also reported that ISS rules were not enforced consistently, in some schools. Canter and Canter (1992) remarked that "by assuring that an appropriate consequence always follows an infraction of a rule, a teacher shows students that there is a relationship between how they choose to behave and the outcome of that behavior" (p. 82). Albert (1996), lending support, noted that consequences are teaching tools which are unpleasant but not harmful, and are designed to help students learn to choose more appropriate behavior in the future.

The data in the study indicate that a majority of the respondents reported that disruption in class, insubordination, and verbal abuse were the three most frequent misbehaviors that resulted in students' placement in ISS. Seventy-four percent of the participants claimed that administrators determined the length of the student's referral to ISS, according to the nature of the misbehavior, in compliance with a predetermined schedule. Four of the eleven interviewees stated that their school's guidelines for assigning students to ISS were clearly stated, two noted that they were not clearly defined, and one claimed that guidelines were lacking. Three interviewees hesitated to use the term *clearly stated* because they felt that each discipline case had to be weighed on its own merit and sometimes that resulted in guidelines being waived. The weighing of each case along with the use of discretion in determining consequences, fly in the face of assertive discipline. Kohn (1996; cited in Porter, 2000) argued that "just as students can be restricted by assertive discipline, [teachers] too are constrained by its methods: [they] become a technocrat who dispenses predetermined consequences without the true professional's use of discretion" (p. 205).

Canter and Canter (1992) claimed that general classroom rules should be

observable and applicable throughout the day. They note that students should be made to realize that consequences would be implemented every time they misbehaved. The writers further pointed out that "in most cases this guideline is absolutely correct. In reality, however, there are going to be times when in your professional judgement it will not be in a student's best interest to provide a consequence" (p. 184). According to Nakamura (2000) "there is not a logical consequence for every problem or behavior. This situation gives [teachers/administrators] a tremendous opportunity to work together with students in finding a solution through problem solving" (p. 260). Additionally, Canter and Canter (1992) observe that a classroom rule that requires students to complete all homework assignments "does not relate to classroom behavior. [Such a rule] belongs in a separate homework policy" (p. 52).

The data in the present study indicate that, at times, ISS was misused. Elsie, a teacher, stated that some students in her school were assigned to ISS for not wearing a hair net in the Home Economics class. She added that ISS was not the consequence for such an infraction. Additionally, a few of the respondents reported that students were referred to ISS for not being prepared for class, for repeatedly missing home-room check, for falling grades, and for aggressive or inappropriate play during break. In keeping with Canter and Canter (1992) argument regarding "providing a consequence for a misdeed may not always be in the student's best interest" one may lend support to Sullivan's (1988) recommendation that a school should have other disciplinary options and ISS should "not [be] a consequence for all offenses, regardless of severity" (p. 191).

The Canter and Canter (1992) argument stated that "positive recognition is the sincere and meaningful attention [given] a student for behaving according to expectations" (p. 57). They add that such recognition can be in the form of behavior awards and special privileges. In the present study positive recognition was viewed as the granting of credit to some ISS students in some schools for good behavior which resulted in the reduction of the initial specified ISS time.

According to the Canters, a teacher should have a one-to-one problem-solving conference with the student who has been continually disruptive, to discuss a specific behavior problem. Albert (1996) suggested that teachers, at the time of a confrontation with a student, should make a friendly gesture – propose a conference for a later date to

discuss the matter – that will defuse the situation. Canter and Canter (1992) stated that the goal of such a conference "is for the student to gain [an] insight into his behavior and ultimately choose a more responsible behavior" (p. 216). The teacher should keep in mind that he/she is "not counseling the student or taking on the role of a psychologist" (p. 207) during the conference which should last a maximum of ten minutes. The writers add, "This conference is a corrective, not punitive, action and should be looked upon as a cooperative effort on the student's behalf " (p. 215). The facets of the Canters' one-to-one problem solving conference between teacher and student are:

- [The teacher should] show empathy and concern.
- [The teacher should] question the student to find out why there is a problem.
- [The teacher should] determine what [he/she] can do to help.
- [The teacher should] determine how the student can improve his/her behavior.
- [The teacher and student should] agree on a course of action.
- [The teacher should] summarize the conference. (p. 216)

One of the interviewees in the current study noted that classroom teachers held one-to-one conferences with referred students after school, but sometimes the issue was not resolved amicably and students resorted to other inappropriate behaviors, such as skipping classes. Understanding how these one-to-one conferences, reported by the interviewee, were constructed can contribute to understanding their failure.

Canter and Canter (1992) claim that the support that parents and administrators offer have a powerful impact on students. Teachers should share their "classroom discipline plan with parents and administrator" (p. 240). According to the Canters, teachers should: a) have students take home to parents a copy of the classroom discipline plan and b) make administrators "fully aware of [the] plan to deal with student behavior and under what circumstance a student [would be sent] to [the] office" (p. 242). The writers further add that a teacher, after taking steps to deal with a problem, may then contact parents. Furthermore, in dealing with inappropriate behavior an administrator can offer a teacher support by counseling "with parent and/or student, instituting ISS, and requesting that parents of problem students come to school" (p. 249).

The data in the study suggest that in some cases parents were informed of their child's referral to ISS. One of the eleven interviewees stated that parents were notified by an administrator, by telephone or by mail, even when a student was referred to ISS for only one class period. Another participant reported that when teachers kept the lines of communication with parents open and treated students fairly, most parents did not take issue when their son/daughter was assigned to ISS. Nakamura (2000) claims that "it is essential to establish healthy two-way communication between the school and the parent(s)" (p. 45). Additionally, one interviewee stated that administrators' telephone calls to parents stating that their son/daughter was assigned an ISS were more positively received than calls informing them about an OSS. Regarding intervention strategies prior to referral to ISS, 90% of the participants in the current study reported the use of teacher-student conferences, while 56% noted the use of teacher-parent-student conferences. Nakamura (2000) pointed out that "many teachers are now moving away from parent-teacher conferences and having parent-teacher-student conferences because they believe it is disrespectful to talk about students and make decisions about them when they are not present and involved" (p. 46).

The ISS programs in the study do not adhere to the principles of the democratic classroom espoused by Dreikurs et al. (1982). The writers claimed that "in a democratic classroom the pupils and the teacher are united in planning, organizing, implementing, and participating in their common activities" (p. 69). In contrast, the strict adherence to rules that is called for in the ISS program is similar to that required by assertive discipline. Porter (2000) claims that assertive discipline attracts the criticisms that are directed at authoritarian theories. The theorist indicated that "under authoritarian theories, teachers set limits on students' behaviours and specify what will happen if those limits are violated" (p. 12). Kohn (1996; cited in Porter, 2000) "contends that authoritarian theories are based on a negative view of [students] which says that [students] will not choose pro-social behavior unless manipulated (through rewards and punishment) into doing so" (p. 202).

Neo-Adlerian theory. Some modern writers, Dreikurs and Albert, for example, have based their theory on the work of Alfred Adler. Dreikurs et al. (1982) and Albert (1996) asserted that: a) all human beings have the need to belong, and b) students choose

their behavior. The writers claim that when students fail to achieve the goal of belonging they tend to choose undesirable behaviors, mistakenly believing that these undesirable behaviors would get them the recognition they seek. The writer termed these erroneous beliefs, mistaken goals. The majority of respondents in the current study reported that undesirable behaviors, such as disruption in class, insubordination, verbal abuse, fighting, and skipping class, resulted in students' placement in ISS. Additionally, possession or use of illegal substances and possession or use of a weapon were the top two misbehaviors that were deemed too severe, by a majority of respondents, to be dealt with through ISS.

Dreikurs et al. (1982) developed a clinical counseling model. The theorists proposed several methods for responding to students' misbehavior, depending on the mistaken goal of the behavior. They noted that the mistaken goals included attention-seeking, power, revenge, and self-imposed inadequacy. Dreikurs et al. (1982) provided teachers with strategies for: a) identifying the cause of students' misconduct, b) responding to the misbehavior, and c) running classroom meetings. Regarding counseling of students, the authors stated that "some counselors are no match for the students who are sent to them ... they are afraid to confront [the students] with their behavior and goals" (p. 241). Dreikurs and his associates further noted that "counseling delinquents involves a process of meaningful discussion" (p. 251). According to Dreikurs et al. (1982) counselors or teachers can help delinquents by counseling them in a group, "not because individual counseling has no value, but because delinquents are so peer conscious that group counseling and group discussions are more consequential" (p. 252).

Short et al. (1994) observe that the ISS program with a therapeutic orientation calls for "a variety of counseling approaches, including individual, group, and peer counseling, reality therapy, and referrals to outside counseling services" (p. 18), if necessary. In the present study 22% of the participants indicated that counseling was not part of the ISS program, 52% claimed that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with some ISS students, and seven percent reported that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor in small groups with some ISS students. One of the interviewees stated that his counseling strategy was adopted from

Glasser's Reality Therapy. He also remarked that schools had erred in the area of counseling; they usually picked the nice teacher who could "talk" to students, but did not have the necessary counseling skills. These findings were partly in keeping with the theories of Dreikurs et al. (1982).

Albert's (1996) *Cooperative Discipline* emphasizes the prevention and correction of misbehavior. If prevention is viewed in terms of deterrence, there is little certainty about its effect. The current study reveals that 14% of the respondents reported that the number of ISS cases had increased greatly or moderately since the ISS program began in their school, 39% indicated that they had stayed the same, and 47% reported that they had decreased moderately or greatly since their ISS program began in their school. Considering the goals of the program – to influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately and to help students develop self-discipline – which were selected by 77% and 73% respectively, ISS can be said to be geared towards correcting misbehavior.

Albert (1996), recognizing that students would misbehave, advised teachers to develop a *classroom code of conduct,* which specifies how everyone, including the teacher, is supposed to interact and behave. The writer expressed the view that the classroom code of conduct should replace class rules, not only because the code covers a wider variety of behaviors, but also because rules are limited in scope and are viewed by students as a controlling method adopted by teachers. Albert (1996) claimed that the code of conduct should be taught and enforced. Regarding the enforcement of the code of conduct, the theorist advised teachers that when misbehaviors occur they should check for understanding, problem-solve when there was disagreement, and refer to the prominently displayed code of conduct. Additionally, the writer noted that steps, such as reviewing the code daily or weekly, modeling self-correction by the teacher, and encouraging student self-evaluation, should be taken to help students become proficient in monitoring and evaluating their behavior.

The data in the study reveal that administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students were involved in the development of ISS. Fifteen percent of the respondents noted that ISS rules were posted in the ISS room in their school, and 32% claimed that their school's ISS rules were listed in the students' handbook. Some

participants in the present study reported that ISS rules were enforced, but not consistently. One of the interviewees claimed that there were instances when students broke ISS rules – some students slept – and the ISS teacher chose to ignore the infraction. According to 42% of the respondents, ISS rules were reviewed at the beginning of each day for the benefit of the assigned students. These findings were not in keeping with Albert's (1996) *Code of Conduct* theory.

Implications for Practice

The study highlighted the benefits of ISS programs; benefits that accrued to students, parents, school staff, and the community. The benefits are as follows:

- ISS protected the community from vandalism that quite possibly would have been committed by suspended students.
- ISS assisted employed parents who could not supervise their children during OSS.
- ISS undermined students' attempts to seek OSS as a vacation or reward for misbehavior.
- ISS kept students in school in a supervised environment where they were required to complete academic assignments.
- ISS enhanced the teaching and learning atmosphere in the regular classroom by removing the misbehaving student.

These benefits seem ample justification for principals, teachers and parents to advocate the usage of ISS programs in the schools.

Inadequate financial resources for operating ISS programs was a major concern. Fifty-five percent of the respondents in the current study reported that no funds were specifically allocated for their school's ISS program, and in some cases the lack of funds served as a deterrent to establishing such programs. Sullivan (1988) reminds us that when no special funding was available for ISS materials and equipment, and the hiring of an ISS teacher "site administrators are often forced to use [not only] a combination of staff members for ISS duty" (p.183), but also to utilize supplies from the regular school budget. "Consequently, planned strategies, [including training needs] are never fully initiated" (p. 183). In such cases, sometimes it is necessary that administrators seek outside funding for ISS when additional funding is not available from school boards.

Hyman et al. (1997) suggested that "inadequate funding may result in increased discipline problems" (p. 212). The writers, citing Hedges, Laine, and Greenwald (1994), stated that "despite popular beliefs to the contrary substantive evidence indicates that school productivity, grades, and scores improve as funding increases" (p. 212).

The data in the study indicate that students were assigned to ISS for a wide variety of behavioral offences, which include failure to do homework, not being prepared for class, and inappropriate play during breaks. Short et al. (1994) claimed that "students who get into trouble in schools are not all alike. There are the avoiders (class skipping, truancy) and disrupters (assaults, troublemaking) .... Schools appear to be attempting to deal with every kind of student in the ISS program" (p. 24). The writers went on to pose the following question:

> Would schools be more successful in changing students behaviors if they decided to deal with only one group – in particular, the most troublesome group of disrupters – by using ISS and developing other strategies for eradicating class-skipping, truancy, and all other nonviolent disruption acts? (pp. 24-25)

The data in the current study reveal that there was little certainty about the status of ISS cases. (Fourteen percent of the participants indicated that the number of ISS cases had increased greatly or moderately since the program began in their school, 39% reported that they had stayed the same, and 47% indicated that they had decreased moderately or greatly.) Kerr and Nelson (1998) suggested that persons involved in implementing an ISS program should "check to see if [it] is reducing behavior problems" (p. 196). If it is not, then the guidelines should be reviewed and adjustment should be made to the program, accordingly. The uncertainty regarding the status of the ISS cases seems to suggest, in general, that some of the ISS programs in three cities in Alberta need to be refined.

Corbett (1981) noted that "communication of intended goals [and] details, such as who is in the program, for how long, and for what reason ... is significant for the success of [an ISS] program" (p. 62). Sullivan (1989a) claimed that the goals and philosophical foundation on which ISS is based should be clearly communicated to staff, parents, students, and the community. The writer adds that consideration should be given to

orienting and involving "the faculty and administration through in-service workshops on the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies, and through provision for established communication channels and regular feedback" (p. 410). The writer also recommended that program goals be translated into meaningful, measurable program objectives. In the current study participants in the ISS program were not well informed about the theoretical model on which ISS was based, about ISS referral procedures, and about the evaluation of the program. Chobot and Garibaldi (1982) stated that "the smooth functioning of the referral process ... is crucial to the success of the program" (p. 335). Additionally, a few respondents (18%) claimed that no information on the referred student was forwarded to the ISS teacher. According to Corbett (1981), administrators must coordinate a system that would facilitate communication of information.

Thirty-three percent of the participants reported that the ISS facilities in their school were isolated from other classrooms, but located in the same building, while 40% indicated that their schools needed carrels for the ISS room. Siskind et al. (1993) indicated that "isolation is a key component of ISS programs .... Students in the ISS classroom should be separated from one another by study carrels or other types of divider .... Isolation and firm discipline help maintain the punitive aspects of ISS" (pp. 1, 2). Additionally, Mendez and Sanders (1981) observe that administrators and staff members involved in ISS should bear in mind that "the separate physical [ISS] setting also provides a unique environment where testing or other rehabilitative endeavors may be initiated" (p. 68).

The data indicated that some schools needed to hire a full-time ISS teacher, and that some of the regular classroom teachers need to supply, promptly, ISS students with enough assignments for them to complete during their stay in ISS. Short (1988) explained, "For any ISS program to function with any limited success, there must be a full-time person in charge of the ISS classroom" (p. 26). Foster and Kight (1988) pointed out that assignments given to students in the regular classroom should also be made available to ISS students.

Sullivan (1989a) claimed that to enhance the rehabilitative aspect of the ISS program, the program should require ISS students to complete academic assignments and should have a counseling component. The writer claims that counseling calls for the

involvement of guidance counselors in the program, on a regular basis. In the present study 52% of the participants indicated that counseling was conducted by the guidance counselor on a one-to-one basis with some students, while 22% of the respondents indicated that counseling was not part of their school's ISS program.

Sullivan (1989a) suggested that all referrals to ISS should be for no less than one school day. Weiss (1983) claimed that "a minimum of two days time will enable the ISS supervisor to work with the students on both academic and behavioral problems" (p. 132). On the other hand, Johnson (1991) noted that "time spent in ISS needs to move beyond specific, set days to also include the ability for students 'to earn' their ways out with demonstrated progress, contingency contracts, and parent involvement" (p. 177). There is a lack of agreement among theorists regarding the length of time students should be referred to ISS. In the current study 49% of the respondents indicated that the average length of referral to ISS was one day while "part of the day" was checked by 26% of the participants. The other alternatives for that item was checked by less than 12% of the respondents.

Thirteen percent of the respondents indicated that no data were collected in their school's ISS program, while 66% reported that "reasons for referral to ISS" were collected in their school's ISS program. Sullivan (1988) observed, "The existence of standardized, frequently monitored record keeping systems significantly contributes to the effectiveness of the evaluation design and to the accuracy and thoroughness with which data are gathered" (p. 186). Regarding evaluation of the ISS program, in the current study 20% of the respondents indicated that their school's ISS program was not evaluated, while 36% reported that their school's ISS program was evaluated, and this turned out to be the most frequently selected response. Mizell (1978) claimed that an interim evaluation of the program should be conducted mid-year, and a summative evaluation at the end of the year.

Thirty-one percent of the respondents reported that their school had no follow-up procedures for former ISS students, while the remaining 69% indicated that their school had some type of follow-up interventions. Sullivan (1988) claimed that ISS programs should contain specific follow-up procedures, for each student, which include monitoring the former ISS student's academic, social and behavioral progress for a specified time,

and communicating with teacher and parents. The writer adds that, "without planned follow-up, there is no means to assess student progress following the suspension period" (p. 187).

Finally, Short et al. (1994) pointed out that ISS "programs can be organized around one specific orientation, or may combine two or more theoretical orientations" (p. 18). The theoretical orientations, according to Sheets (1996) are labeled punitive, therapeutic, or academic.

Implications for Research

The findings of the study indicate the need for continued investigation of ISS programs, as a disciplinary strategy, especially in a Canadian context. Specifically, the generated issues that need further investigation are as follows:

- The major data-collection instruments used in the present study were questionnaires and an interview guide. Although particular attention was paid to the wording in each instrument, further testing and analysis are deemed necessary in order to improve the instruments. It is recommended that a) an in-depth study of ISS using the case study method be undertaken, and 2) a study of ISS using the questionnaire instrument be conducted.
- Some schools reported not having an ISS program. Further research might consider the extent of similarities and differences between schools with an ISS program and those without, with reference to the use of OSS.
- It is recommended that a study be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of ISS relative to school attendance, academic performance, the total number of referrals to ISS, and recidivism rate.
- The current study identified various locations in which ISS was implemented, the absence of a specific ISS teacher, and the implementation of some counseling by a guidance counselor. A comparative study of the different types of ISS program is required. Specifically, a study comparing: a) ISS programs located in the principal's office, having no specific ISS teacher and no counseling with b) ISS programs that are located in a specific classroom, with a full-time ISS teacher, and counseling provided by a guidance counselor.

- It is recommended that an investigation of students' perceptions of ISS programs in high schools in Canada be undertaken. Such research could yield valuable information regarding the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of various types of ISS programs.

Conclusions

Using the conceptual framework proposed in Chapter 2, a study was conducted to explore and describe the various ISS programs in three urban centers in Alberta, and to identify factors that are perceived to support or inhibit success of these programs. The conclusions, discussed below, were based on the major findings of the study and the review of the existing literature.

The findings of the current study indicate that ISS was used for a variety of student offenses, which included failure to do homework, not being prepared for class, repeatedly missing home-room checks, being very far behind in school work, and student intensified conflict with the teacher. This raises concerns regarding whether ISS was being used, in some schools, to force students out of the regular classroom thereby making the ISS program a "dumping ground." ISS is not the response to all classroom discipline problems; perhaps some teachers require help in classroom management. Another possible explanation for such referrals is the lack of clear guidelines for referring students to ISS. However, educators should bear in mind that very specific guidelines for referring students to ISS may not allow them the flexibility to determine the seriousness of the misbehavior and the amount of time the student should be assigned to the ISS program.

Operationally, classroom teachers were required to provide assignments for ISS students, and the ISS supervisor was supposed to enforce the ISS rules. The study findings indicate dereliction of duty by some ISS supervisors and by some classroom teachers. Sheets (1996) pointed out that, for an ISS program to be successful, a necessary ingredient is cooperation from the faculty. The researcher concluded that in the current study administrators seemed to shy away from demanding compliance from staff members regarding implementation of the ISS policy. Administrators need to stress the importance of staff cooperation.

Noticeably lacking in some ISS programs in the study were adequate funding,

tutoring, and systematic follow-up procedures. Government practices of fiscal restraint may be blamed for inadequate funding of ISS programs in schools in Alberta. Great discrepancies among ISS programs were reported in the literature reviewed, and the findings of this study also indicate the occurrence of disparities among ISS programs in the three urban centers and between schools in close geographical proximity in these centers in Alberta. (These discrepancies come as no surprise to the researcher.) For example, some respondents reported that their school's ISS program was conducted in a corner of the principal's office, while others reported that their program was held in a classroom equipped with learning material, carrels, and audio and video surveillance cameras. May be use of the principal's office as the ISS venue was due to the lack of space in the school, and may be the discrepancies among ISS programs were due to the lack of staff commitment to the implementation of ISS programs.

ISS staff should be required to provide tutorial assistance for referred students, when necessary, and to be also vigilant for students' academic problems. In addition, the researcher, in keeping with Sheets (1996) and Sullivan (1989a), concluded that schools should have some planned, individualized student follow-up strategies to determine how the former ISS student was getting along in the regular classroom.

Sheets (1996) claimed that an effective ISS program will have three components – foundations, operations, and evaluation. The foundation component will contain a philosophical statement which "coincides with the school's overall educational philosophy" (p. 88), and the operational component will contain a full-time ISS teacher and resources. The writer further stated that adequate funding for the program was necessary and the various resources should "include an appropriate environment, instructional materials, [follow-up procedures], and cooperation from the faculty" (p. 89). The ISS programs in the study have deficiencies. In the present study parts of the foundation components were missing, the operational components were inadequate, and in some cases the programs were not evaluated. In keeping with the idea proposed by Sheets (1996), the researcher concluded that "for an ISS program to be effective all these components must be in place. One component complements the other" (p. 90).

The findings indicate that a few students preferred being in the ISS room rather than in their regular classroom. It seemed that these students did not view ISS as

punishment; perhaps ISS seemed to meet the needs of these students because they viewed the ISS room as a sanctuary. The researcher reasoned that the regular classroom teacher may need to change his or her behavior when dealing with these students. However, according to Opuni et al. (1991), if students do not perceive ISS as punishment then efforts should be made to reverse this trend, otherwise schools would be creating a situation which encourages students to disobey rules, in order to be referred to ISS, rather than obey rules. When school administrators or teachers perceive that ISS is not being viewed as punishment by students, then other strategies should be adopted when these students misbehave.

In the present study, restrictions were placed on ISS students. It seemed that one of the common purposes of ISS, as indicated in the findings, was to assist students in getting back into their regular classroom as quickly as possible. Undoubtedly, appropriate behavior while in ISS, completion of assignments by ISS students and teaching of problem-solving strategies to ISS students would help attain this objective.

There is a need for ISS. However, ISS programs were, in some cases, more punitive than rehabilitative. Hochman and Worner (1987) noted that punishment alone would not result in change of behavior. "Student misbehavior reflects poor decision making .... When administrators and counselors consider discipline as an opportunity to teach students improved problem-solving skills, counselor intervention follows logically" (p. 93). The researcher, in keeping with Johnson (1991), concludes that ISS programs need to include counseling and rehabilitative components to address the inappropriate behavior of students. Additionally, the researcher concurs with Sullivan (1989a) who recommended that ISS students should be counseled by qualified counselors.

In the present study, some schools lacked: a) a formal system wide training program for staff members involved in the program, b) a specific ISS teacher, and c) a specific ISS room, and resources such as books, carrels and computers. These shortcomings need to be addressed. Additionally, some programs were evaluated, mostly informally, while others were not, and in some schools evaluation was not clearly defined. The researcher concludes that ISS programs should be formally evaluated, at least once a year, because, according to Bone (1982), "program monitoring and evaluation [are] important elements of an ISS program" (p. 1359A). Sullivan (1988)

adds that the evaluation design should be based "on pre-established program goals and objectives" (p. 196).

Parents involvement in the program was mostly limited to telephone calls when their son or daughter was referred to ISS. Lending support to Bowdring's (1988) proposal, the researcher concludes that a way has to be found to involve parents in the program, other than merely informing them of their son's or daughter's referral to ISS.

Collins (1985a) claimed that many problems exist in some ISS programs. The findings in this study indicate that: a) some teachers failed to submit an adequate amount of assignments for students assigned to the ISS program; b) there were inconsistencies in the reasons for assigning students to ISS; and c) some students viewed the ISS room as a sanctuary. The researcher concludes that these problems could be addressed through two-way communication among stakeholders in the program. These participants should openly exchange ideas and criticisms, thereby bringing a variety of perspectives to bear on the problem, hence increasing the chances of solving the problem effectively.

Eleven percent of the respondents indicated that their ISS program was patterned after a theoretical model, 37% noted that their school's ISS program was not patterned after a theoretical model, and 49% stated that they did not know if their school's ISS program was patterned after a theoretical model. Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that: a) teachers and administrators did not have a theoretical background for their ISS program; and b) a minimal search of the literature on ISS was conducted by some schools, and in instances when the ISS literature was reviewed the information gleaned was not clearly communicated to all stakeholders. A search of the literature pertinent to ISS is of utmost importance during the planning and implementation stages of the program.

In the current study a majority of respondents (70%) suggested that their ISS program was based on a custodial/strict authority philosophy. According to Short, Short and Blanton (1994) "custodial educators believe that students must learn to conform to the system," and they prefer handling misbehaviors with control techniques (pp. 6, 7). The majority of respondents in the study reported the use of control techniques such as isolation of students from the regular classroom, having a deterrent that addresses inappropriate behavior, and not permitting students to take part in the normal routine of

the day. The researcher claims that ISS programs should not be mainly custodial, instead ISS programs should be therapeutic. Specifically, ISS students should be counseled and/or assisted in developing problem-solving skills that would further help them develop appropriate behavior.

Respondents also indicated that the goals of their ISS program were: a) to influence students, through counseling to choose to behave appropriately; b) to help students develop self-discipline; c) to help students develop problem-solving skills; d) to help students improve their self-image; and e) to reduce students' feeling of alienation. The researcher concluded that schools, in their quest to achieve the goals of their ISS program, should opt for the therapeutic model. Whitfield and Bulach (1996) also recommended the inclusion of a rehabilitative element in ISS programs.

In the study ISS helped keep students in school, and it was also effective in providing a healthy classroom environment, conducive to learning for disciplined students, by removing the disruptive student. ISS programs in the study contained some, not all, of the ISS characteristics enumerated in the literature (Sullivan, 1989a; Pare, 1983; Mendez & Sanders, 1981). Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that: a) staff, parents, and students should be involved in the planning and implementation process; b) the ISS literature should be reviewed during the planning and implementation stages; c) during the planning stage stakeholders should observe some ISS programs that are in operation, and also interview some educators experienced in the implementation and administration of ISS programs; d) ISS goals and evaluation procedures should be established during the planning stage; e) programs should receive adequate financial support; f) a limit should be placed on the number of times a student could be referred to ISS per semester; g) teachers should submit an adequate amount of assignments for ISS students to complete; h) there should be systematic individualized follow-up procedures for former ISS students; i) referral guidelines should be clearly stated and communicated to staff members; j) schools should have a full-time ISS teacher and a specific ISS room; k) there should be formal in-service ISS training programs for staff members; l) data relating to the program should be collected for the purpose of evaluation and for serving as the basis for subsequent changes; and m) steps should be taken to ensure that the rehabilitative aspects of the program are implemented.

The current study improved on knowledge about ISS, as practiced in three urban centers in Alberta. In the opinion of the researcher onerous responsibilities will continue to be placed on school administrators to come up with new or improved strategies that fall somewhere between detention and expulsion, to address student misbehavior.

Reflections

It was deemed necessary, by the researcher, to record his reflections on the study because in his view these reflections would provide insights for others who plan a similar undertaking. First, the researcher's reflections on the methodology employed in the current study is presented. These are followed by the researcher's thoughts regarding the usefulness of ISS theory in the current study.

Reflections on the Research Methodology

The current study investigated the characteristics of ISS programs in Alberta, and also sought to identify factors that were perceived to support or inhibit success of the programs. A review of the relevant literature indicated that research on ISS was carried out using quantitative, qualitative, and in some cases a combination of both approaches. The researcher opted to use a combination of both methods – quantitative and qualitative. In the study the qualitative approach generated data that not only filled gaps in the data collected through the quantitative approach, but also provided the researcher the opportunity to listen to the experiences of participants and observe their behavior. In retrospect the researcher maintains that the combined approach was useful.

Being at the research sites offered the researcher the opportunity to see some of the disparities that exist among ISS programs, to understand the physical context in which the programs operate, and to capture the varied meanings of ISS programs provided by interviewees. Some ISS programs were conducted in a corner of the principal's office, while others were held in a classroom equipped with learning material, carrels, and audio and video surveillance cameras.

The research questions preceded the development of the theory-driven conceptual framework (see Figure 2.1, p. 50). Specifically, the research questions directed the researcher towards the various data-collection devices – questionnaires, interviews, and

document collection – used in the study.

The Use of ISS Theory

The literature reviewed in this study was largely from North America – United States and Canada. The ISS literature revealed that there was a gap that needed to be filled. Specifically, researchers have conducted several studies of ISS programs in various school jurisdictions in the United States, however, I was unable to find similar studies of ISS programs in a Canadian setting. This study of ISS programs seems to be the first of its kind in a Canadian context.

The review of the literature not only assisted the researcher in developing the conceptual framework for the study, but also assisted the researcher in constructing the questionnaire instrument and the interview schedule that guided the investigation. In addition, given the exploratory nature of the study, any generalization of the findings must be viewed with caution. However, this general framework of analysis could be used in further studies of ISS programs.

Over the past months insights have been gained regarding the thrust in the prevention of disruptive and other inappropriate student behavior in some schools in Alberta. According to Short and Noblit (1985), "Students that break rules, disrupt class, and assault others are as complex as are the solutions to changing their behavior" (p. 115). The findings in the current study indicate that ISS programs were developed with little or no input from students. The researcher was led to ask, "Are students' misbehavior a possible result of adult imposed solutions to discipline problems in school?" There are no easy solutions to school discipline problems, and as Short and Noblit (1985) claim, "ISS programs are not a panacea, just another strategy" (p. 115).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
In-School Suspension (ISS) Survey

Directions: Please answer the questions by marking (X or √) in the space preceding the response which best describes the In-School Suspension (ISS) program in your school. You may check more than one response per question, when applicable. If none of the stated choices is appropriate, please write your response in the space provided following the word "other."

Section A

Background Information

Code No. _____

1. What is your present position?
   - ☐ 1. Principal
   - ☐ 2. Assistant/Vice-Principal
   - ☐ 3. Teacher
   - ☐ 4. Guidance counselor
   - ☐ 5. Other (Please specify) _____

2. What is the student enrolment in your school?
   - ☐ 1. Under 300
   - ☐ 2. 301 - 600
   - ☐ 3. 601 - 900
   - ☐ 4. 901 - 1200
   - ☐ 5. 1201 - 1500
   - ☐ 6. 1501 and over

3. What grades are housed in your school?
   - ☐ 1. Grades 7 through 9
   - ☐ 2. Grades 10 through 12
   - ☐ 3. Other (Please specify) _____

4. In which school system is your school?
   - ☐ 1. Public
   - ☐ 2. Separate

5. How long has your school ISS program been in operation? _____ years.

Section B

Planning and Implementation

6. Who participated in developing your ISS program? (Check all that apply)
   - ☐ 1. Principal
   - ☐ 2. Assistant/Vice-Principal(s)
   - ☐ 3. Teacher(s)
   - ☐ 4. Guidance counselor(s)
   - ☐ 5. Students
   - ☐ 6. Parents
   - ☐ 7. Other (Please specify) _____

7(a). Was your ISS program patterned after a theoretical model?
   - ☐ 1. Yes
   - ☐ 2. No
   - ☐ 3. Don't know

7(b). Please explain _____
_____

8. Who is involved in implementing your ISS program? (Check all that apply)
   - ☐ 1. Principal
   - ☐ 2. Assistant/Vice-Principal
   - ☐ 3. Teacher(s)
   - ☐ 4. Guidance counselor(s)
   - ☐ 5. Students
   - ☐ 6. Parents
   - ☐ 7. Other (Please specify) _____

9. Please provide two reasons why your school decided to plan and implement an ISS program.

i. _____

_____

ii. _____

_____

Funding

10. How is your ISS program funded? (Check all that apply)

☐ 1. Direct grant specifically designated for the ISS program

☐ 2. An allocation in your school budget for ISS

☐ 3. Other (Please specify)

_____

Philosophy

11. What is the philosophy behind your ISS program?

_____

Goals and Effectiveness

12(a) What are the goals of your ISS program? (Check all that apply in this column)

12(b) **For each of the goals you have selected in 12(a),** please indicate how effective your ISS program is by circling **one** of the numbers.

	Very Effective	Moderately Effective	Mildly Effective	Not Effective
☐ 1. To provide a punitive environment that will serve as a deterrent	4	3	2	1
☐ 2. To influence students, through counseling, to choose to behave appropriately	4	3	2	1
☐ 3. To help students develop problem-solving skills	4	3	2	1
☐ 4. To provide an alternative to out-of- school suspension	4	3	2	1
☐ 5. To diagnose students' learning difficulties	4	3	2	1
☐ 6. To help students improve their study habits	4	3	2	1
☐ 7. To help students develop self- discipline	4	3	2	1
☐ 8. To reduce truancy	4	3	2	1
☐ 9. To remove the problem student from the classroom for a specified time	4	3	2	1
☐ 10. To assess students' progress in academic skills	4	3	2	1

	Very Effective	Moderately Effective	Mildly Effective	Not Effective
☐ 11. To reduce the number of discipline problems	4	3	2	1
☐ 12. To focus on instruction in the basic skills	4	3	2	1
☐ 13. To help students improve their self- image	4	3	2	1
☐ 14. To monitor students behavior during ISS	4	3	2	1
☐ 15. To monitor students' behavior after they leave ISS	4	3	2	1
☐ 16. To reduce chronic tardiness	4	3	2	1
☐ 17. To reduce the student's feeling of alienation from school	4	3	2	1
☐ 18. To serve as a negative consequence for inappropriate behavior	4	3	2	1
☐ 19. To fashion activities in home and school survival training for students	4	3	2	1
☐ 20. Other (Please specify) _____	4	3	2	1

Directions: Please answer the question by circling one of the numbers, from the following key, for each statement.

Response Key

1. Don't know	3. Increased moderately	5. Decreased moderately
2. Increased greatly	4. Stayed the same	6. Decreased greatly

13. Since your ISS program has been in operation, what is the condition of the following?

1. The number of ISS cases	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. The recidivism rate of ISS	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. The number of out-of-school suspension cases	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. The recidivism rate of out-of-school suspension	6	5	4	3	2	1

14. Directions: Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement by circling one of the numbers from response key, for each item.

Response Key		
1. Don't Know	3. Agree	5. Disagree
2. Strongly Agree	4. Undecided	6. Strongly Disagree

1. The ISS program has a good reputation with students	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. Teachers in our school support the ISS program	6	5	4	3	2	1
3 Guidance counselor(s) in our school support the ISS program	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. Parents of students at our school are in favor of the ISS program	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. The ISS program is effective in improving classroom behavior when students return from ISS	6	5	4	3	2	1
6. The ISS program is effective in acting as a deterrent to misbehavior	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. It is better for students to be in ISS rather than suspended at home	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. The ISS program is effective in keeping students up-to-date with their regular school work	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. Too many students are assigned to ISS on any one day	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. ISS is over-used as a disciplinary strategy in our school	6	5	4	3	2	1
11. Preparing lessons for students in ISS is an added burden for teachers	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. The stay in ISS is too short for much positive student behavior change to occur	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. Isolation from peers, as occurs in ISS, is an effective strategy to deter misbehavior	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. The ISS program protects the rights of students to learn	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. The ISS program makes students aware that they are responsible for their actions	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. ISS provides an opportunity for positive intervention with the student.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Referral to ISS

15. What intervention strategies are typically used with students prior to their placement in ISS? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ 1. Teacher-student conference
- ☐ 2. Teacher-parent(s) or guardian(s) conference
- ☐ 3. Teacher-parent(s) or guardian(s)-student conference
- ☐ 4. Guidance counselor-student conference
- ☐ 5. Peer counseling
- ☐ 6. Behavior contract
- ☐ 7. Lunch-time and/or after school detention
- ☐ 8. Lowering of student's grade
- ☐ 9. Reward system
- ☐ 10. Denial of extracurricular activities
- ☐ 11. Telephone call to parent(s) or guardian(s)
- ☐ 12. Referral to principal or assistant/vice-principal's office
- ☐ 13. Other (Please specify)

_____

16. What information about the referred student is given to the ISS teacher?

- ☐ 1. None
- ☐ 2. Teacher write-up on student's recent behavior
- ☐ 3. ISS teacher has access to student's file
- ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

_____

17. Who assigns the student to ISS? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ 1. Principal
- ☐ 2. Assistant/Vice-Principal
- ☐ 3. Teacher
- ☐ 4. Guidance counselor
- ☐ 5. Parents
- ☐ 6. Other (Please specify)

_____

18(a). What school or classroom behaviors have resulted in students being assigned to ISS? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ 1. Late for school or class
- ☐ 2. Truancy
- ☐ 3. Skipping class
- ☐ 4. Disruption in class
- ☐ 5. Fighting
- ☐ 6. Insubordination
- ☐ 7. Stealing
- ☐ 8. Verbal Abuse
- ☐ 9. Cheating
- ☐ 10. Smoking in a non-smoking area on school grounds
- ☐ 11. Possession or use of illegal substances
- ☐ 12. Possession or use of a weapon
- ☐ 13. Damaging property
- ☐ 14. Failure to do homework
- ☐ 15. Other (Please specify)

_____

18(b). With reference to 18(a) above, please place a (*) to the left of the three most frequent misbehaviors that result in students being assigned to ISS.

19. Are certain misbehaviors deemed too severe to be dealt with through ISS?

☐ 1. Yes ☐ 2. No

20. If you answered yes to #19, please specify

_____

_____

21. How is the length of assignment to ISS determined?
- ☐ 1. The principal determines the number of days on an ad hoc basis
- ☐ 2. The principal determines the number of days according to the nature of the misbehavior in compliance with a predetermined schedule
- ☐ 3. The student's case is reviewed periodically by ISS staff to determine when the student should return to the regular classroom
- ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

22. What is the average length of referral to ISS?
- ☐ 1. Part of the day
- ☐ 2. One day
- ☐ 3. Two consecutive days
- ☐ 4. Three consecutive days
- ☐ 5. Four consecutive days
- ☐ 6. Five consecutive days
- ☐ 7. Other (Please specify)

_____

23. What is the average number of students assigned to your ISS program on any one day?
- ☐ 1. 1 - 4
- ☐ 2. 5 - 8
- ☐ 3. 9 - 12
- ☐ 4. 13 - 16
- ☐ 5. 17 - 20
- ☐ 6. 21 - 24
- ☐ 7. 25 or more

24. What is the maximum number of times per academic year a student can be assigned to ISS?
- ☐ 1. There is no maximum
- ☐ 2. Twice
- ☐ 3. Three times
- ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

Facilities

25. Where is your ISS facility located?
- ☐ 1. Isolated from other classrooms but located in the same building
- ☐ 2. Located in the midst of other classrooms
- ☐ 3. Located in the principal, assistant/vice-principal's office
- ☐ 4. Located in a separate building but on school grounds
- ☐ 5. Located somewhere else in the school district
- ☐ 6. Other (Please specify)

_____

26. What would make your ISS facilities more suitable? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 1. They are adequate
- ☐ 2. Need a larger room
- ☐ 3. Need carrels for students
- ☐ 4. Need more books
- ☐ 5. Need audio-visual equipment
- ☐ 6. Need a telephone
- ☐ 7. Need an emergency buzzer
- ☐ 8. Other (Please specify)

_____

Staffing

27. What types of personnel work in your ISS program? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ 1. A full-time certified teacher
    - ☐ 2. Two or more teachers who rotate
    - ☐ 3. Guidance counselor(s)
    - ☐ 4. Substitute teacher(s)
    - ☐ 5. Assistant/Vice-Principal
    - ☐ 6. Other (Please specify) _____

28. What training is provided for ISS staff? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ 1. Formal introductory workshop on ISS
    - ☐ 2. On-going in-service education on ISS
    - ☐ 3. None
    - ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

Rules and Procedures

29. How are students in ISS informed of the ISS rules? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ 1. Rules are reviewed at the beginning of each day in ISS
    - ☐ 2. The rules are posted in the ISS room
    - ☐ 3. The rules are listed in the students' handbooks
    - ☐ 4. The rules are enclosed with the ISS letter that is sent to parent(s) or guardian(s)
    - ☐ 5. Other (Please specify)

_____

30. What are the consequences when a student disobeys the rules in ISS?
    - ☐ 1. Assigned to ISS for an extra day
    - ☐ 2. Receive an out-of-school suspension
    - ☐ 3. Other (Please specify)

_____

31. What rules and procedures are followed at lunch time?
    - ☐ 1. Suspendees have lunch in the ISS room
    - ☐ 2. Lunch is scheduled when other students are not in the cafeteria
    - ☐ 3. Suspendees have lunch in an isolated area in the cafeteria
    - ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

32. What are the rules and procedures for restroom breaks?
    - ☐ 1. Students are escorted as a group and monitored by ISS teacher
    - ☐ 2. Escorted individually as needed
    - ☐ 3. Group goes at a designated time unescorted
    - ☐ 4. Students go individually as needed and unescorted
    - ☐ 5. Other (Please specify) _____

33. What requirements must be met before a suspendee may return to the regular classroom? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ 1. Must serve the minimum specified time
    - ☐ 2. Must complete all assigned class work
    - ☐ 3. Earn credit for good behavior which can reduce the initial specified time
    - ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

34. Are students in ISS allowed to participate in extracurricular activities?
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No

35. What activities are restricted or forbidden in the ISS program? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 1. Socializing
- ☐ 2. Sleeping
- ☐ 3. Moving around the room
- ☐ 4. Other (Please specify)

_____

Assignments

36. What do students do while in ISS? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 1. Class work assigned by the regular classroom teacher
- ☐ 2. Homework assigned by the regular classroom teacher
- ☐ 3. Work on pre-designed work packets or booklets
- ☐ 4. Read library books
- ☐ 5. Ability tests
- ☐ 6. Other (Please specify)

_____

_____

37. If students in ISS use work packets or booklets, what types of exercises do they contain? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 1. Not applicable
- ☐ 2. Value clarification
- ☐ 3. Social skills
- ☐ 4. Basic reading comprehension skills
- ☐ 5. Basic math skills
- ☐ 6. Basic English skills
- ☐ 7. Other (Please specify)

_____

38. Are students assisted with their work while in ISS?
- ☐ 1. Always
- ☐ 2. Usually
- ☐ 3. Occasionally
- ☐ 4. Never
- ☐ 5. Other (Please specify)

_____

39. Do students receive credit for satisfactorily completing regular class work while in ISS?
- ☐ 1. Yes
- ☐ 2. No

Record

40. What data are collected in ISS? (Check all that apply)
- ☐ 1. The total number of students referred to ISS
- ☐ 2. Recidivism rates
- ☐ 3. Reason for referral to ISS
- ☐ 4. Data on grade level
- ☐ 5. Data on ethnicity of student
- ☐ 6. Data on gender of student
- ☐ 7. Written description of each student's behavior while in ISS
- ☐ 8. Other (Please specify)

_____

Counseling

41. How is counseling incorporated in your ISS program? (Check all that apply)
    - ☐ 1. It is not part of the ISS program
    - ☐ 2. It is conducted by the guidance counselor(s) on a one-to-one basis with some ISS students
    - ☐ 3. It is conducted by the guidance counselor(s) on a one-to-one basis with all ISS students
    - ☐ 4. It is conducted by the guidance counselor(s),in small groups, with some ISS students
    - ☐ 5. It is conducted by the guidance counselor(s),in small groups, with all ISS students
    - ☐ 6. It is conducted by the guidance counselor(s) in a whole group setting with the ISS students
    - ☐ 7. Other (Please specify) _____

Follow-up

42. What is the follow-up procedure with students once they leave ISS?
    - ☐ 1.There isn't any
    - ☐ 2.The guidance counselor occasionally talks with the students in the following weeks
    - ☐ 3.The guidance counselor routinely talks with the students in the following weeks
    - ☐ 4.Other (Please specify) _____

Section C

43. How frequently is your ISS program evaluated? _____

44. Approximately what percentage of the student population was assigned to the ISS program during the past academic year? _____ %.

45. What are the three main strengths of your ISS program?

    _____

46. What are the three main weaknesses of your ISS program?

    _____

47. What three suggestions or recommendations would you make for improving the ISS program in your school?

    _____

48. Please provide any comments regarding aspects of your ISS program which you think were not covered in this survey.

49. Would you be willing to take part in a follow-up audio taped interview?
    - ☐ 1. Yes
    - ☐ 2. No

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. Some respondents have stated that this school has an informal In-School suspension program. In your opinion what does "informal ISS" mean?
2. How does ISS fit into the school's overall discipline strategy?
3. (a) Does the school have clearly defined guidelines for assigning students to ISS? Please explain the procedure used to assign students to ISS.
   (b) How are these procedures communicated to:
   - (i) staff
   - (ii) parents
   - (iii) students
4. (a) What do students do while in ISS? Please describe the daily/class period sequence of activities from entrance to exit.
   (b) Are students given any remedial instruction or tutoring while in ISS?
5. Is the program different for students who have been repeatedly assigned to ISS? Please explain what these students are required to do while in ISS.
6. (a) Does your ISS have a counseling component?
   - (i)Who counsels the students while they are in ISS?
   - (ii) How frequently?
   - (iii)What counseling techniques are used?

   (b) **If no**, in your opinion should counseling be part of ISS? Please explain.
7. (a) In your opinion, is your school's ISS program a success?
   (b) How does the school determine the effectiveness of the ISS program?
8. (a) Is the school's ISS evaluated?
   - (i) By whom?
   - (ii) Please explain the evaluation procedure?

   (b) **If no,** in your opinion should ISS be evaluated? How?
9. What do you perceive to be the opinion of the following regarding ISS?
   - (a) the principal/assistant principal(s)
   - (b) teachers
   - (c) parents
   - (d) students
10. What would you do to enhance the school's ISS program?
11. Have parents ever contested the referral of their son/daughter to ISS? Please explain.
12. I have no further questions. Is there any other issue pertaining to ISS that you would like to comment on before we terminate this interview?

Appendix C

Requesting Permission to Conduct Research

July 1999

Dear [Superintendent's Name]:

I am presently attending the University of Alberta as a full-time doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Policy studies. As part of the requirement for this degree, I am undertaking a study of In-School Suspension (ISS) programs in public and separate schools which contain any of the grades 7 through 12 in three urban centers in Alberta. The purposes of the research are to: 1) examine and describe the various ISS programs in use in the schools which contain any of the grades 7 to 12, and 2) identify factors which are perceived to support or inhibit success of these programs.

I am writing to request permission to collect data on the topic, through the use of questionnaires and interviews, from principals or vice-principals, teachers, guidance counselors, and other school personnel who are involved in the daily operation of the programs in your district during the 1999/2000 academic year.

Please be assured that the University's ethical guidelines will be strictly maintained. Participation in the study is voluntary, and all information will be treated confidentially. The final report will not identify any person, school, or school jurisdiction by name, thereby preserving anonymity. A summary of the study will be made available to all participating school districts.

Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to receiving a positive reply from you at your earliest convenience. If there are any questions or concerns regarding my research, please contact me at (780) 432-2117.

Yours sincerely,

Pete Hall

Appendix D

Schools With No ISS Program

5 a) Does your school have an ISS program?

(b) If No, what are the two most important reasons why your school does not have an ISS program?

i. The school does not have enough money to fund an ISS program
ii. Lacks the facilities
iii. Does not believe that ISS is effective
iv. Never though of implementing an ISS program
v. Had one and it was discontinued
vi. Other (Please explain) _____

Appendix E

Covering Letter

Dear [Principal's Name]:
As indicated in our telephone conversation, I am presently attending the University of Alberta as a full-time doctoral candidate in the Department of Education Policy Studies. As part of the requirement for this degree, I am undertaking a study of In-School Suspension (ISS) programs in public and separate schools with any of the grades 7 through 12 in three urban centers in Alberta. The research study has two purposes: 1) to examine and describe various ISS programs in use in the schools with any of the grades 7 through 12, and 2) to identify factors which are perceived to support or inhibit success of these programs. Although there is a body of research on ISS, very little has been done on such programs in a Canadian setting. This is a fascinating topic, and I cannot over emphasize the importance of your participation in this research study.

Your district superintendent has granted me permission to conduct the study. My study is descriptive, and data will be collected, **first** through the use of questionnaires, and **second**, by audio-taped interviews with a sub-sample of questionnaire respondents who agree to participate further in a follow-up 30-50 minute interview. While the data would be used primarily for my research dissertation, a secondary purpose may include use of the data for presentations, articles for other educators, and post-doctoral research.

I realize that this is a further infringement on your valuable time, but I trust that it is not too imposing. I am seeking volunteers for my study of ISS, and I hope that you will participate, at least in the questionnaire phase. The ISS questionnaire would likely require 20-30 minutes to complete. If you answer Yes to question 49, please fill out the enclosed Interview Consent Form and return it along with your completed questionnaire. You may be contacted at a later date to set up an interview. Additionally, I hope you will assist me by distributing the enclosed questionnaires to the various staff members who are involved in the ISS program in your school. It would also be greatly appreciated if you would collect and mail the completed questionnaires and Interview Consent Forms in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided, by [date], **2000**.

Please be assured that the University's ethical guidelines will be strictly maintained. The code number on the questionnaire is for administrative purposes only. Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you have the option to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time, without risk or penalty. No deception of any kind is used in this study. The third party involved in transcribing and analyzing the interview data will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with respect to the names of the subjects and data obtained from the interviews. All information will be treated confidentially, and the final report will not identify any person or school jurisdiction by name, thereby preserving anonymity. A summary of the study will be made available to all participating school districts.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding my research, please contact me at (780) 432-2117. Additionally, you may contact Dr. Frank Peters, supervisor of this study at:

Department of Educational Policy Studies
7 – 104 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB
T6G 2G5
Telephone: (780) 492-7607
E-Mail: frank.peters@ualberta.ca

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Pete Hall

Appendix F

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

If you are willing to be interviewed, please complete and return this form.

I, _____, hereby consent to be interviewed by **Pete Hall**.
name of interviewee

I understand that:

- I may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty
- all the information gathered will be treated confidentially and will be discussed with your academic supervisor.
- any information that identifies me will be destroyed upon completion of the research
- I will not be identifiable in any documents resulting from this research.

I also understand that the results of this research will be used only in the following:

- research thesis
- presentations and written articles for other educators
- post-doctoral research

_____
Signature

_____
Date signed

For further information concerning the completion of the form, please contact:

Pete Hall
Department of Educational Policy Studies
7 – 104 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB
T6G 2G5
Telephone: (780) 432-2117

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University of Alberta
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Telephone: (780) 492-7607
E-Mail: frank.peters@ualberta.ca

Appendix G

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FORM FOR USE WITH TRANSCRIBER

I, _____, agree to maintain the strictest of confidence in
name of transcriber
transcribing the audio-tape recorded research interviews submitted by **Pete Hall**.

I will not:

- quote
- make copies of the interview tapes or interview transcripts
- discuss with others any aspect of the research conversation between the researcher and myself

I will also ensure that **all** original audio-tape recordings and transcripts are returned to the researcher, and **all** such recordings and related computer files will be destroyed.

_____
Signature

_____
Date signed

For further information concerning the completion of the form, please contact:

Pete Hall
Department of Educational Policy Studies
7 – 104 Education North
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB
T6G 2G5
Telephone: (780) 432-2117

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